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# A Gender and Development (GAD) implementation evaluation: Testimonios reveal the successes, challenges, and unpredicted results for women's equality and community sustainability

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A GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT (GAD) IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION:

*TESTIMONIOS* REVEAL THE SUCCESSES, CHALLENGES,  
AND UNPREDICTED RESULTS FOR WOMEN'S  
EQUALITY AND COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

BY

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B.S., Ohio State University, 1972

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DISSERTATION

Submitted to the University of New Hampshire  
in Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirement for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy  
in  
Natural Resources and Environmental Studies

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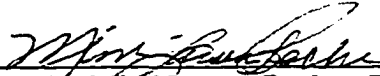
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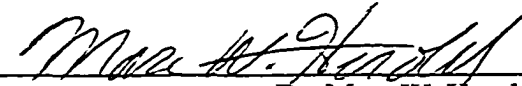
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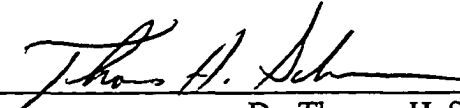
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DEDICATED  
to  
Kevin, Kalim, Lila, Julian, Sara, Ross, and Dayyan  
and  
the Quechua Baha'is in Chuquisaca, Bolivia

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Interdisciplinary work may be more attractive than it is navigable. Its advantages are also its faults. For the multilingual and polyconceptual thinker, interdisciplinary studies provide a safe haven where holistic and synergetic perspectives are welcomed. On the other hand, spaces with fluid boundaries are more demanding on scholars because of increases in levels of complexities and additional foundational canons. Interdisciplinary study is not for everyone; clear steering requires a high degree of vision.

A Third World development study within an interdisciplinary Natural Resource and Environmental Studies Ph. D. Program required that I constantly renegotiate linguistic archaeologies and genealogies cross disciplines. The terms “growth” and “development,” for instance, not only mean different things to different people, but also have different meaning cross sciences and within disciplines. I entered this program as an educator trained in developmental psychology with the understanding of development as the changes within the biosocial, cognitive and psychosocial domains of an individual. By the end of this program, I learned that in economics, development came to represent either the persistent international strategies to improve the ills of humankind, or the failed attempts that have contributed to illiteracy, poverty and environmental degradation. Growth in human development are the changes in the physical size of an individual; in economics, growth refers to a rise in national or per capita income and product through the application of science to problems of economic production, industrialization,

urbanization, and overpopulation. In humans, development can occur without growth [and growth without development], but in economics, growth, according to economic theorists, is impossible without development. Whereas in humans, growth and development are mutually reciprocal processes that enhance the capacitation of attributes and qualities, in economics, the means is confused with the end in itself and serves a particular political agenda (Kabeer, 1994).

I strategically selected a dissertation committee that would trust me to sort out how growth led to inequities, how development impacted the environment, and how redistribution issues are related to research methodologies. That each member of my committee embody knowledge of the consequential and serious gender asymmetries were critical selection criteria.

From each of my honored committee members, I hold a gem of their wisdom. I acknowledge here their gifts.

In her gentle, and ever-present attention to collaborative studies, Nodie Oja's expertise in adult development and adult education opened my eyes years ago to the complex and multidimensional layers of the adult human being. From Nodie, I learned to shift from my role as mentor in the classroom to my role as action researcher in the field. Her experience and insight prepared me for the pitfalls and obstacles in PAR, which enabled me to challenge my naiveté and to support my facilitation style.

Julia Rodriguez, a kindred spirit whose "hybrid" combination matches mine, provided the support for the development of the historic and feminist theorizing context of my study. Before her bags were unpacked in Durham to fulfill her joint faculty position in Women's Studies and History, I snagged her to serve on my committee. Her

encouragement to conduct fieldwork [at my age!] and her commendations of its risks validated my experience.

Years ago, qualitative research scholar Tom Schram remarked that only some people “have the stomach” for ethnography. Ethnographers, he said, are an odd bunch that frequently don’t fit in elsewhere. In ethnography, I discovered my stomach and found a home. Tom’s directive to keep my focus centered on my own “borderlands” as the starting point for my research stance challenged me to integrate the diverse cultural parts of myself vis-à-vis the ethnography process. By that I mean ethnography *as* cultural therapy has helped me to find greater meaning in the imaginary boundaries between “here” and “there.”

Never have I experienced in all my education and psychology study a more emotionally charged course than Marc Herold’s class on Economic Development. I entered Marc’s world unsure and skeptical, not only of myself but also of a worldview I closed my eyes to, only to emerge as knowledgeable of the enterprise and as a scholar of its critique. Marc’s stunning brilliance, his undying commitment to ‘the revolution,’ and his keen sense of teaching combine to create an individual whom I strive to emulate.

Lastly, I acknowledge my advisor, Mimi Larsen Becker. Desperate for her to sign off as my doctoral advisor to gain admittance into the program, I later shuttered to learn what I really got myself into. As a woman charting new waters in a male dominated field, in her own [and rigorous way], Mimi held the light while I stumbled in the darkness through the long, and seemingly unending tunnel in a field to which I had no previous experience. In an unusual twist, I diligently obeyed and followed the path that she herself once traveled. She succeeded in leading where no others had and I am grateful for her

guidance to place blinders on my divergent eyes. To Mimi Larsen Becker, I thank you for your faith and confidence in me.

For my Master's thesis, I had the privilege and honor to receive narrative stories from Quaker activist, feminist, sociologist and peace scholar Elise Boulding, and wrote a life history of her "becoming." I acknowledge Elise as a silent mentor, whose gift for "imaging the future" and whose training on facilitating the imaging I employed with rural Indians in Bolivia. From Elise, I learned to be patient with myself, to take time to "become" a person, and to extend peacemaking outwardly from the family to the greater community.

My deepest appreciations are extended to the Ruhia Cardoso and Sabino Ortega for their service as my companions to the Andean villages I visited. As translator and driver respectively, Ruhia and Sabino became co-researchers to my research. I thank Bruce and Teresa Fox for opening their home and apologize for asking them to relive the past. Mona Grieser of Global Visions, Inc., Mary Powers from the BIC, and Eloy Anelo from Nur University provided me with invaluable information. To the Quechua woman and men who opened windows from which I caught glimmers of a particular way of life in the *campo*, I am grateful.

Once, I said that I wished that I had someone to do for me what I do for my students—watch, listen, and reflect. In the Writing Across the Curriculum Program at the University of New Hampshire, I found two writing "witnesses" without whose intuition and skill in the writing process I would still be lost in circles. First, in her capacity as a writing Fellow with the WAC, Anne Stork, biologist/scientific writing consultant/Zydeco accordion player extraordinaire, provided me with the skills to interpret, translate and

transcribe my circular, and often convoluted writing into clear, linear and readable language. Secondly, Amy Zenger, whose background as the daughter of a U.S. AID development “expert” in Latin America and whose contagious laugh saved me from myself, taught me how just the right word, even a comma, can work magic. I was already familiar with the power of witnessing in peace action; if words are tools for empowerment, the power of witnessing the writing process is transformational. My wish to the University of New Hampshire is that it continue to nurture this program in all ways possible.

Having said as much, no advanced studies work, for a woman or for a man, could be accomplished without the patient and loving support from family. To my mother and father, whose cultural differences made me who I am today, I thank you for your continued vigilance from the next world. To each of my children, emerging young adults, I remind you that anything is possible. Whether a seed of a dream or the dream itself haunts you, acknowledge it, hold and cherish it, and when either the fertile soil finds it or when you discover the soil, let go and cultivate the creativity. This study would not be possible without the artistic skill and research insight of my Bolivian travel companion and youngest son, Dayyan, who turned 15 in Cochabamba amidst a revolution. And, finally, to my husband Kevin, whose unconditional devotion, good cooking, routine cleaning, and excellent massages I could not have done without. I am grateful for his listening ear and ability to summarize in a few sentences what took me sometimes hours to articulate. To all, I deeply and humbly offer my appreciation.



## PREFACE

I learned of the “Traditional Media as Change Agent” project in 1995, at a gender training institute where the video “Two Wings: Changing Behavior and Attitudes” was presented to workshop participants to demonstrate women and men’s capacity to make changes in the culturally entrenched gendered treatment of women and to illustrate an innovative, non-material approach to development. With other the participants of the gender workshop, I watched ordinary women and men from indigenous, diverse communities in Malaysia, Cameroon and Bolivia follow a “village participatory research” training process designed to generate lively and interactive gender communication dialogue for social change.

We were shown how female and male representatives from rural villages and urban centers collected demographic information about their households, earned income sources, levels of schooling, developed skills and leadership roles. We watched “researchers” huddle on the ground or in community centers to analyze the results of their findings about travel flows, work patterns, and resource allocation. We saw these representatives industriously document their findings on an informal village map and in a labor calendar to identify how was time spent, who did what work for whom, and who benefited.

The women and men in the video from Cameroon, Bolivia and Malaysia identified problems women face in male dominated communities and consulted, face-to-

face, about difficult and complex power relations. They used traditional media, such as theatrical role plays, music and dance, or puppetry to generate solutions to gender problems. In the final scenes of the video, the viewers were moved as women testified to the dramatic changes in men's behavior. Men not only improved in their treatment of women, but women also transformed in how they viewed themselves, with increased self-esteem and increased desire for self-improvement.

Everyone loves a happy ending, and we, as participants of the gender-training workshop, were no exception. After watching this video, we believed that for the women and men in the participating Cameroon, Bolivia and Malaysian villages, the tides had turned and gender equity was a *fait accompli*. The social realities of the people who had participated in this gender equity project froze in our minds as if they existed in an unchanging "anthropological present."

As a first-generation Latina woman, whose Colombian mother was displaced by unfortunate circumstance, my perpetual gaze towards the South, an expression of a rootedness to a particular ancestry and way of life that I am unable to trace, has led to a life-long concern for the indigenous people and their well being, the places and the faces that became my 'imagined home' and 'imagined family.' Years later, when searching for "a problem" for doctoral research on women and Third World development, I was drawn to the images of the village women and men in their UNIFEM tee-shirts who sang and danced while sewing seeds in fields in Cameroon, the braided Quechua women who happily stirred large pots of a potato stew under the Andean sky, and Arawak couples from Malaysia who cheerfully talked through their paper shadow puppets about childcare responsibilities. Since my interest in an interdisciplinary program in Natural Resources

and Environmental Studies originated from a desire to better understand the consequences of the development fervor of last half of the twentieth century on the women and men of the Third and Fourth Worlds, and the environments in which we all live, I selected the Bolivian site of the "Traditional Media as Change Agent" to study as a way to participate with the places and faces of my imagined home and family.

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## ABSTRACT

### A GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT (GAD) IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION:

*TESTIMONIOS* REVEAL THE SUCCESSES, CHALLENGES,

AND UNPREDICTED RESULTS FOR WOMEN'S

EQUALITY AND COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

by

Melinda Salazar

University of New Hampshire, December, 2002

This is a case study of a Gender and Development implementation evaluation in several rural, Baha'i communities in Andean Bolivian. "Traditional Media as Change Agent," funded by UNIFEM (UN International Fund for Women) and implemented by BIC (Baha'i International Community), was an innovative, non-economic approach to change gender attitudes and behaviors by including men in a consultative process using traditional media. This study responded to criticism that GAD ignored the environment, was lodged squarely in Western economic development thought and Western feminist values, and lacked the voices of the women and men for whom development aims to benefit.

This study focused on the narratives of Quechua women and men who recollected their experiences and the study investigated the institutional arrangements leading to the project implementation. The study's aims were three-fold. First, the study aimed to learn



about the project's successes and failures from the participants' perspectives. Secondly, the study provided a space where the women and men participants could engage in knowledge production about Gender and Development. Thirdly, the study aimed to animate a social change Participatory Action Research (PAR) process. The study used mixed research methods that included feminist approaches to Participatory Action Research; postcolonial, ethnographic-oriented methods to the Latin American genre of *testimonio*; and systems thinking about spirituality, ecological and cultural sustainability.

The study found some changes from the original project persisted, some behaviors reverted back to previous cultural norms, and some ill-feelings from the project implementation lingered. The study discovered unpredicted results in the lives of an unintended target audience where young girls become the first generation to attain levels of education beyond the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. This finding revealed a double-bind for the GAD approach: a GAD success can constitute a failure for the sustainability of the rural, indigenous community. The most viable approach to shifting gender relations with rural, indigenous populations may be the inclusion of children and youth, a Family and Development (FAD) approach. Lessons can be learned from one Baha'i community that resisted this development trend by following a spiritual vision of social and economic development.

## INTRODUCTION

### Overview of the 1989 Traditional Media as Change Agent Project

In 1989, a modestly funded development project for indigenous women and men in rural Third World<sup>1</sup> communities introduced to the development world an innovative, non-economic development approach to support social change for women (Appendix A). Two NGOs, the UN International Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Baha'i International Community (BIC) partnered "with the aim of reaching international development goals of equality and social and ecological sustainability" (Heyzer, 1996). The project, "Traditional Media as Change Agent: Communication and Consultation Approaches to Community Behavior Change" (TMCA) was implemented in three diverse Third World regions, Cameroon, Malaysia and Bolivia.

### Why the 1989 TMCA Study was Noteworthy

The project was noteworthy for three reasons. First, the BIC proposed a unique concept to improve rural women's status. Instead of promising to provide tangible results or to yield a concrete product, such as a cook stove, flour mill or contraception, this initiative wanted to address the deeper root causes of inequity. The goals of the project

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<sup>1</sup> The answer to the question, "what do 'we' call 'them'?" is still debated in development discourse and practice, and until such time as the underlying power inequities are sorted out, a discussion of researchers' assumptions are needed. Although some development studies researchers have used more numerically accurate phraseology, such as "two-thirds world" and "one-third-world" to refer to the countries within the continents of Latin America, Asia and Africa, most use the terms "Third World" and "South" interchangeably, as I do in this study. Although I use the terms "First World" or "North" to refer to industrialized, developed countries, I also use the term "West" when referring to Eurocentric models, such as economic theories.

were non-tangible and were aimed at changing negative and acculturated attitudes and behaviors towards gender roles.

Secondly, based on a different set of ideological beliefs, the project responded to limitations in the development trend inspired by Marxist or socialist feminist ideals. The "women only" approach, known as Women and Development (WAD), excluded men because of their tendency to dominate projects. The 1989 TMCA involved men in partnership with women to identify shared community problems associated with the low status of women.

Finally, the "Traditional Media as Change Agent" utilized a systematic application of consultation, a distinctive method of non-adversarial decision-making and conflict resolution promoted in the Baha'i teachings.<sup>2</sup> The project also taught core qualitative village participatory action research methods (PAR) to community leaders and organizations that focused on problem solving and awareness of gender issues. Women and men analyzed their own, community-identified problems associated with the low status of women and utilized traditional media, such as local dance, music, socio-drama, and puppetry to communicate these research results.

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<sup>2</sup> The skill of consultation is a specific procedure for building consensus and investigating truth, developed from the spiritual texts of the Baha'i Faith. Within the Baha'i community, the method is used among individuals or by the local, national or international institutions and bodies. Consultation is not used exclusively within the Baha'i community. Audiences from the greater community frequently meet with the LSA and the BIC applies these skills with other NGOs or in UN restructuring dialogue. Consultation has the potential for wide application in development and with sensitive issues, such as gender relations.

### Rationale for the Approach of the Project

The rationale for the approach was grounded in the philosophical beliefs of the BIC, a faith-based organization rooted in the principles of the Baha'i Faith. First, the project assumed that to change women's status requires more than simply altering some aspect of labor activity, or even increasing income (Grieser, 1993). To affect change, individual and community core values with regards to gender would have to change. Secondly, the project included men because of the underlying principle of the "oneness of humankind," specifically the fundamental equality of women and men influenced the idea of including men in the process.<sup>3</sup>

Thirdly, the rationale for using PAR methods was based on the premise that individuals and communities must investigate "truth for themselves" instead of outside agencies determining individuals or a community's reality (Grieser, 1993). In addition, the whole community must be involved in the social and economic development process.

### What the 1989 TMCA Project Accomplished

After the data collection stage, the project included series of activity strategies to bring men into a dialogue process with women, which included drama and the use of a video camera where women were taught to use technology to document the process. The

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<sup>3</sup> The following quotes from the Writings of the Baha'i Faith reflect this goal:

"The emancipation of women, the achievement of full equality between the sexes, is one of the most important, though less acknowledged prerequisites of peace. The denial of such equality perpetrates an injustice against one half of the world's population and promotes in men harmful attitudes and habits that are carried from the family to the workplace, to political life, and ultimately to international relations. There are no grounds, moral, practical, or biological, upon which such denial can be justified" (Universal House of Justice, 1986).

"Women have equal rights with men upon the earth; in religion and in society women are a very important element. As long as women are prevented from attaining their highest possibilities, so long will men be unable to achieve the greatness which might be theirs" ('Abdu'l-Baha, 1982).

community members developed a social vision for their families and community that became a social incentive for behavior change (Grieser, 1993).

Conclusions Made by 1989 Directors. The project directors were surprised to learn that the conclusions the indigenous women reached through their PAR [process] in all three sites were remarkably similar despite the fact that the communities have diverse cultural, political and historical contexts. The women identified four specific issues:

1. women's lack of voice within the household due to her lack of education,
2. the existence of male domination in all circumstances,
3. mismanagement of household finances by men, and
4. women's desire to participate in the allocation and disbursement of household finances.

Additionally, their PAR results revealed women's frustration at men's alcohol abuse and the often-accompanying physical and/or emotional abuse to women.

Project Evaluation. Results (quantitative and qualitative evaluation documents) showed success in a significant number of men's lives. For example, labor patterns between men and women shifted with men assuming a larger burden of the household's physical responsibilities and sharing women's external tasks; men performed roles previously considered socially taboo, such as helping in cutting vegetables or caring for children; and women's participation in decision-making processes significantly increased.

#### Aftermath of the 1989 TMCA Project Implementation

Traditional Media as Change Agent has been hailed as a Gender and Development (GAD) success. A video, "Two Wings," was published and distributed by

the Baha'i International Community. The video is used throughout the world in gender education settings to teach about the human capacity for attitudinal and behavioral gender change, and about international development goals of equality and social and ecological sustainability. In addition, a doctoral dissertation on the 1989 project was published as a manual entitled "Traditional Media for Gender Communication" (Brooke, 1995). This dissertation is used to train facilitators and groups to help communities develop communication skills using traditional media, and is widely distributed by the well-known development catalogue, *Women, Inc.* In public speeches, UNIFEM's director, Noeleen Heyzer, frequently calls upon the project as model for successful gender change (Powers, personal conversation, 2001). And, finally, papers about the development initiative are presented at Baha'i social and economic development conferences.<sup>4</sup> But, no literature has analyzed the 1989 TMCA project from a GAD perspective.

### Statement of the Problem

Development agencies generally evaluate projects immediately after implementation. Even those evaluations that lean towards yielding qualitative results look for aggregate change. Rarely do funding agencies conduct long-term, longitudinal evaluations, nor do they include the detailed accounts of other voices, the women and men development aims to benefit. Also, development agencies tend to reinvent their past, "rediscover things already known," or learn lessons from failed projects (Rathbeger,

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<sup>4</sup> The annual Baha'i conference on Social and Economic Development for the Americas is sponsored by the Eshraghie and Mahmoud Rabbani Charitable Trust, a nonprofit, tax-exempt public charity. The conference addresses a wide range of grassroots, development issues and attracts development practitioners and scholars.

1995).<sup>5</sup> In addition, in the late 1980s, when ideas of shifting gender inequities and ideas of sustaining the environment for future generations were beginning to emerge on the global radar, the links between the two were loosely tied, if at all, in the policies and programming of development funding agencies.

The qualitative and participatory evaluations of the 1989 “Traditional Media as Change Agent” project revealed successes in the short-term attitudinal and behavioral changes towards women and gender roles and the empowerment of women in all three implementation sites. More than ten years have passed since the implementation of the 1989 “Traditional Media as Change Agent” project. Many changes have taken place in the political, economic and cultural conditions in the nations in which the project was implemented, and many changes have occurred in the lives of the individuals and their communities. What’s more, the way we look at development, gender, women and the environment has changed in the intervening decade, as well as has the way we look at alternative development research.

This case study looks, ten years later, at the successes and failures of the 1989 project and asks questions about what happened in the lives of the participants and to their communities in one of the implementation sites. In addition to “giving voice to a culture of silence” and learning directly from the indigenous women and men who participated in the 1989 TMCA project, I desired to animate a social change process that

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<sup>5</sup> Eva Rathgeber (1995) notes the lack of holism in the conceptualization efforts of development. She states, “Donor/NGO communities champion the cause of each “new” approach to development. They form alliances, which enable the adoption of core sets of ideas, and methodologies that become the central knowledge and practice of the “new approach.” Consequently, there tends to be very little learning from earlier experiences” (p. 205).

would influence how individuals and communities thought about gender and their environment.

I used similar methodologies to those of the original project. I drew from feminist perspectives to Participatory Action Research (FPR) and used ethnographic-oriented methods to make the study “more ethnographic” (see Chapter 4, Methods). Specifically, I used the Latin American genre of *testimonio* to provide a discursive space for indigenous women and men to engage with feminism, to make development personal, and to produce knowledge about Gender and Development. This study revisited the original participants of "Traditional Media as Change Agent" in several small, remote, rural Quechua communities in the Andean region of Bolivia.

### Conceptual Framework

I support the original project's methodological position that ordinary people have the capacity to solve their own problems and that consultation is a useful tool to complement the ideology and practice of Participatory Action Methods (PAR). PAR is an appropriate method for the social investigation of problems (Maguire, 1989) with a "democratization thrust" (Liebenberg, 1997). To mitigate the omission of a gender analysis in PAR, I apply a feminist approach to PAR (FPR).

### Assumptions

To break from the assumptions of colonial (discursive) representations of Third World women, I acknowledge that Third World women (and men) are not a monolithic category, and therefore, I do not speak for all women and men living in Third World



nations, nor for all groups living in Bolivia. For example, to represent all Third World women as helpless, poor, rural, and victims<sup>6</sup> is to ignore women's separate historical, cultural, and socio-political realities. There are many kinds of women living in Third World countries, and women's lives are different within rural and urban regions.

Moreover, I support the philosophical critique of modernity set forth in the Baha'i Writings, a view that is also endorsed by some postmodernist feminists. In this worldview, the development fervor is seen as one that sustains technological progress over building capacities in the "silenced and ignored voices" (Parpart, 1993). The assumptions of development that I bring to this study suggest that ordinary women and men have the potential to guide and direct a future that fulfills their destiny as a people. Education is the means by which women and men capacitate themselves in all the potentialities of human consciousness as expressed in the arts and the sciences. Material development is lifeless and without spiritual power. For civilization to progress, both the material and the spiritual must be linked and coordinated ('Abdu'l-Baha, 1982).

### Research Design

This study uses a mixed research strategy that incorporates methods of ethnographic-oriented research, feminist approaches to participatory action research (FPR), and the Latin American literary genre of *testimonio* (testimonies). Additionally, the study utilizes feminist approaches to Participatory Action Research to stimulate a social change action within the individuals and communities I studied. This approach is

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<sup>6</sup> Current feminist postmodern literature has questioned GAD research for its reinscription of neo-colonial discursive practices.

consistent with the use of a specific kind of consultation known to the Baha'i community as a "method of involvement."

The purpose of the study is to glean first hand from the Bolivian participants of the initial development project about their perceptions of the project and their understanding of the changes, if any, that occurred in their lives and in the community. Also, the study aims to learn more about women's status, gender relations and environmental issues in a rural, Third World region from the point of view of the people themselves. Finally, I hope to animate a PAR experience that would stimulate social change within individuals and communities.

#### Research Objectives

Specifically, this study was designed to address five research objectives.

- 1) To determine, ten year after the initial intervention, what changes, if any, occurred in the lives of the Quechua women and men participants in the Bolivia site as a result of an early Gender and Development initiative funded and implemented through the strategic cooperation between two international organizations.
- 2) To specify the nature of the changes, if any, in the community as a result of this development intervention.
- 3) To identify whether and/or how the community supported, sustained or resisted these changes.
- 4) To determine whether the original goals of the project were met, and whether there were any unpredicted results of the project.

- 5) To identify what lessons can be learned to inform policy planners about gender development and about the long-term sustainability of the approach.

In order to interpret the results from the study on a broader, more global scale, it is important to frame them in the context of the trends and patterns in development practice for women within the context of the United Nations “development decades.”<sup>7</sup> Also, the geographic, historic, political, economic, social and spiritual conditions that influence Quechua Indians in Bolivia set the context for the study. Additional questions were posed to elicit information to enable the development of a contextual map that is intended to ensure adequate specification of the problem situation and establish the appropriate boundaries for the research (Lasswell, 1971).

- 1) How has the evolution of feminist theory influenced development practices for women, and what are the critiques?
- 2) What are the trends and patterns in development research and practice for women that influenced this project?
- 3) What are the geographic, political, economic, cultural, and spiritual contexts important to understand for the Bolivian situation and the Quechua participants of this study?

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<sup>7</sup> The United Nations first development decade of the 1960s industrialized the former colonial countries through economic strategies, which included rapid economic growth, redistribution with growth, “basic needs” and structural adjustment programs (SAPs) that expected wealth would “trickle down.” The second development decade of the 1970s responded to the failure of “trickle down” and stressed the development of human resources. Global changes in world politics, globalization and the environment influenced the third development decade in the 1980s, a period referred to as the “lost decade,” where increased neo-liberal policies and privatization increased poverty and resource exploitation in Third World countries for debt repayment. In the 1990s, after shifts in the socialist worlds, non-governmental organizations, transnational social movements, and UN world conferences shaped the democratization movement of the fourth development decade (Braidotti, et. al, 1994).

- 4) What are the institutional arrangements of the BIC, and how did/does the philosophy and ideology of the Baha'i Faith influence the implementation of this project?

### Overview of the Research Approach

The majority of the research data is based on interviews conducted with the original participants who could be located in 2000, ten years after the initial intervention. I observed the community dynamics, participated in community activities as an "inside/outsider" to the community, and upon request, served as a technical assistance facilitator for social and economic development (SED). Also, I used a focused interview design, administered under formal protocols to the organizational and institutional representatives who had varying degrees of implementation involvement. I triangulated these primary data sources with other secondary sources, which included unobtrusive recordings of the Bolivian social, economic, political and cultural context.

This study was conducted in three different languages (English, Spanish and Quechua) and the fieldwork occurred during what has become the world's most successfully organized local struggle against the globalized privatization of local resources ("the War on Water").<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> As explained in greater detail in Chapter 2, the War on Water was a grassroots coalition of interested groups who successfully protested a contract the Bolivian government negotiated with "Aguas del Tunari," a Bechtel Corporation subsidiary, to sell water rights in the city of Cochabamba. After weeks of protests, demonstrations, general strikes and transportation blockages, President Hugo Banzer imposed martial law on April 8, 2000.

### Significance of the Study

Most of the published development writings celebrate the successes of development initiatives but the negative results are rarely published. This research sheds light on the personal and community difficulties and complexities of project implementation over and beyond what we read in development literature. Aid agency funding generally runs out upon completion of a project's implementation, allowing for short-term evaluation only. Rarely do project evaluations by donor agencies consider the long-term effects of an intervention on a community, nor do they consider its influence on secondary participants, such as the youth and children. Projects implemented in multiple sites generally do not have time to investigate the specifics of the historic and racialized cultural context within which its participants live.

In the Gender and Development (GAD) approach to empowering women, the focus is on shifting gender relations. The early GAD projects did not consider environmental factors or the sustainability of a community in the empowerment of women. Since the UN Fourth World Women's Conference in Beijing, the Women, Environment and Development (WED) approach has tried to forge links between women, gender, poverty and the environment. But, when GAD moved center to become the mainstream development approach in the latter half of 1990s and into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, environmental perspectives were not necessarily applied. Also, GAD literature rarely, if ever, includes the voices of men.

Feminist approaches to PAR have identified the gaps in PAR research design, literature and practice (Maguire, et. al., 2001). These conversations explore issues of power, control, and knowledge construction within PAR, the academy and feminist

research; inside/outsider issues; the interconnected relationships between local groups and communities; and ethical dilemmas and multiple meanings of feminism and feminist research. As a feminist conducting PAR, I look to these conversations, and include another ethical and "spiritual" dilemma—"doing research" within the Baha'i community. There is little published literature on this particularity, only informal conversations between scholars in academic and cyberspace settings.<sup>9</sup>

### Conclusion

In 1989, UNIFEM and the BIC partnered to fund and implement an innovative Gender and Development project in several grassroots communities in Cameroon, Malaysia and Bolivia. The project did not provide tangible outcomes but aimed to shift attitudes and behaviors towards gender and women's role by including men in a consultative and participatory research action process and by using traditional media as a communication tool. By all documentation accounts, "Traditional Media as Change Agent" was successful in linking community problems with women's role, in raising awareness about women, and in shifting attitudes and behaviors. This is an ethnographic-oriented study that drew upon a feminist approach to PAR to learn from the women and

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<sup>9</sup> One academic setting for these discussions is in the Association for Baha'i Studies, a Canadian professional organization committed to promoting a vision and a purpose that is both spiritual and social for the advancement of human knowledge and civilization through the study and application of the teachings and precepts of the Baha'i Writings. The cyberspace site is "Baha'i Sociology" ([bahai-sociology@BCCA.org](mailto:bahai-sociology@BCCA.org)), a listserve for social science academics. Noble Creations (<http://www.bcca.org/services/lists/noble-creation/index.html>) is a Baha'i Internet development forum. In an unpublished doctoral dissertation entitled, "Native Conversion, Native Identity: An Oral History of the Bahá'i Faith among First Nations People in the Southern Central Yukon Territory, Canada" (University of Washington, 2000), Carolyn Patterson Sawin addresses how traditional oral narrative serves to integrate First Nations and Baha'i identities.

men in the Bolivian site about the successes and failures of the project, their perceptions of the project, and their understanding of the changes that endured ten years later. In addition, this study aimed to stimulate a social change process within the individuals and communities.

## CHAPTER I

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

*Development was to be a liberating project—a project for removal of poverty and leveling of social-economic inequalities, based on class, ethnicity, and gender. While the dominant image of “development” persists as a class and gender neutral model of progress for all, the experience of “development” has been the opposite, polarizing the dichotomizing society, creating new forms of affluence for the powerful, and new forms of deprivation and dispossession for the weak (Shiva, 1988).*

This chapter is divided into three major sections. The first section, “The Development Context: Definitions, History and Issues,” sets the background for the conditions leading to the 1989 TMCA project by examining the definitions, history and issues for development in the post-World War II world, and explains development trends for women in Third World countries. The second section, “The 1989 TMCA Project Context: Institutional Interactions,” provides a brief background to the growth NGOs and then explores the interactions of the institutional mechanisms that led to the 1989 TMCA project. The third section looks at the conceptual framework of systems theory.

#### The Development Context: Definitions, History and Issues

Development is the term used not only to refer to a material entity, but also to signify a historical process (Arbab, 2000). Development is a “modern” phenomenon that has only been in existence within the past 50-60 years and is a product of the race



between the Western NATO and former Eastern bloc nations to acquire new lands and peoples after the second World War following the collapse of colonial empires.

“Development,” as a way to “bring peace and greater prosperity” to the “backward” nations of the world, according to Harry Truman’s 1948 inaugural address (quoted Escobar, 1995), is an invention of the First World nations and was the means by which “they” would be made like “us.”

This strategy is referred to as “developing the underdeveloped” and was deployed vis-à-vis the modern economic practices of the developed, industrialized First World nations. To accomplish development goals, new professionals, known as development economists, theorized ways to promote growth, the gradual advancement to progressive stages of national or per capita income and product, throughout the “undeveloped” world vis-à-vis industrialization, capital accumulation, planning, foreign aid, and technology transfer. These development “experts” were predominantly men and were employed by development funding agencies, founded and executed under the auspices of the United Nations beginning in 1946. Aid agencies, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United States Agency for International Development (US.AID), applied these linear and non-dialectical theories of growth to Third World peoples. However, development theory and its practice carried connotations that were not only of improving material poverty but also of peoples’ “backwardness” (Arbab, 2000).

### Development Assumptions

Development assumptions are grounded in the premise that the people of the "developed" nations (United States and Western European) represent the standard, civilized and normalized human being, and the people of the "underdeveloped" nations are seen as primitive, poor, and inferior. The human subjects of development-women, men, youth and children of the "underdeveloped" world-were treated in practice, as ignorant, unmotivated, lazy, and superstitious. Particular subjects, men, were 'targeted' for improvement, for modernization, and for labor. Other subjects, the women, were ignored.

Development is also built on the assumption that modernization was the "only force capable of destroying archaic superstitions and relations, at whatever social, cultural, and political cost," and the inevitable route was through industrialization and urbanization (Escobar, 1995, p. 39). Modernization defined progress and progress was the determining factor in the material advancement of a society. However, these assumptions served political agendas (Kabeer, 1994), and according to Nandy (1989) "displaced the identities of the suffering and brutalization of millions"<sup>1</sup> (Nandy, 1989 in Escobar, 1995).

### Women as "Casualties"

During the 1950s and 1960s, the attempts to increase economic growth by modernizing the "less advanced" societies bypassed women in the development process.

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<sup>1</sup>Nandy refers to the austerity measures of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and structural adjustment programs of the World Bank, whose policies reduced internal social services profoundly and directly impacting the lives of women and children.

The development models of that era viewed women in terms of their biological and social functions in the home as reproducers-homemakers, mothers, and housewives.

Development policy aimed to make women better mothers and further enhance their "productivity" in the private sphere through family planning programs, maternal and infant health care, nutrition planning, and home management. Development literature generated from the emerging field of feminist scholarship revealed declining conditions for women, and by the mid 1970s, women's status continued to deteriorate vis-à-vis men's role in the modernized agricultural sector.

In 1970, Esther Boserup published *Woman's Role in Economic Development*, seminal work on the important roles women play in agriculture and in rural development. Boserup looked at how modernization policies changed patterns in sexual division of labor, and as men's roles shifted from agricultural sectors to industrial sectors, women in subsistence agricultural sectors did not have access to credits, training and technology (p. 78). Women, she showed, did not automatically benefit from development programs, and often the economic development practice contributed to the further deterioration of women's role and status (Braidotti, et al, 1994). By ignoring women, economic development planners missed women's important contribution to agriculture and to other productive activities in the household and community. Modernization was having a negative impact on women by "changing patterns in the sexual division of labor and displacing them from their traditional areas of work" (Braidotti, et al, 1994 p. 79).

The Society for International Development (SID) initiated the first critique by an institution of the mainstream approach to economic development, and fueled by the liberal feminist agenda, sought solutions to including women's traditional status with

economic opportunities (Rathgeber, 1988). In the U.S., the 1973 Percy Act opened doors for SID to strategize with UN funding agencies.<sup>2</sup> By the mid-1970s, the World Bank and USAID established a new service provider, Women in Development (WID), charged to serve a new client group, the "poor" and "neglected," and created new professionals, liberal feminist development "experts." Since the 1970s, the WID agenda has set policy for, spawned research on, set trends in, and engendered critique about women and development.

### Theories and Propositions of Development Programming for Women

Trends in development research and practice reflect the changes of "women in development" efforts. The terms "WID" (Women in Development), "WAD" (Women and development), "GAD" (Gender and Development), and "WED" (Women, Environment, [sustainable] Development) represent differing views of the relationship between women, gender and development in research, policymaking, and NGO practice since the mid-1960s. Each term is associated with a specific set of assumptions and values leading to the formulation of strategies for the participation of women in the development process. The research methodologies used by traditional development agencies of each approach differ in theory and practice. The foundations of each tradition are rooted in the specificities of feminist theory and feminist research. The practice of each tradition is situated in the funding decisions of international agencies in the North and in the South,

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<sup>2</sup> The amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the Arms Export Control Act became known as the Percy Act of 1973 and stated that U.S. bilateral assistance agencies were required integrate women into the economies of developing countries. (Women in Development: AID's Experience, 1973-85).

and is implemented by development "experts" on the ground in the programs and projects with women and/or men.

Women in Development (WID): Including Women in the Development Process

WID argued that women are the primary breadwinners in subsistence economies--3.5 billion of the world's 6 billion people--and work longer hours and devote a larger share of their earnings to supporting their families than do men (Jacobson, 1992). Men are more likely to earn cash income than women, but are less likely to spend their earnings on family maintenance, and therefore less likely to pull their families out of poverty (Jacobson, 1994). When women and men participate in programs, research shows men dominate the program. To make resources more available to women, and thereby improve her and her family's status, WID was designed to make access to resources available using three general approaches: 1) income-generating projects, 2) projects that provide labor-saving technologies, and 3) projects that improve women's local resource access.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Credit schemes, most commonly known as the Grameen Bank approach, and small-scale income-generating projects became popular in the early 1980s as successful ways to foster women's economic participation in the public sphere. Micro credit lending and earned income are seen as the most effective tool to fight and break the cycle poverty. The guiding principles of these approaches assume that if poor women earn money, they will increase their status by enhancing their family's well-being, and improving their self-esteem through increasing their own power in the household. According to this thinking, families benefit because when women have access to money, they generally expend a larger percentage on their families as compared to men (USAID). Improved self-esteem shifts the power dynamics, which increases women's decision-making opportunities within the family and the community (Mahmud, 1992). The second approach, labor-saving technologies and improving access to resources aimed to improve the quality of life for women in Third World countries, which was seen by development agencies as seriously diminished because they are lacking Western technologies resulting in an inordinate amount of time used to secure basic necessities. Women's productivity is viewed as the means to improving her personal, family and national well-being. Reducing women's labor load with laborsaving technologies, such as a flour grinder or a cook stove would save time and she could be more effective in the market. This approach is used most widely by USAID (1982). Increased productivity depends on women's improved access to resources, e.g. land, improved farming techniques, information, employment and is rooted in cultural and social institutions and economic processes (Coelho, Coffey, 1996). Tribal or village customary law, as well as state legislation, inhibits women's access to land and security tenure, health care and reproductive rights,

WID Shortcomings and Successes. The benefits of including women in the development process through WID programming overall seemed like a good idea, but it didn't work. The development policies that by-passed women during the 1950s and 1960s, now, under WID, viewed women as a "valuable resource to be harnessed for economic development" (Braidotti, 1994, p. 80). By the 1980s, policy planners and researchers acknowledged that WID programs were ineffective in improving women's status. Policy strategies took a short-term, symptomatic approach to a larger, systemic problem—the lack of participation and lowered status of one half of the world's population. The attempt to integrate women in the development process was futile at best, an approach likened to treating cancer with a band-aid (Beneria and Sen, 1981).

Specifically, income-generating projects did not change the traditional cultural beliefs that underlie women's subordination (Howard, 1995). In addition, the bulk of research on micro lending enterprises indicate credit programs positively impact women by reducing poverty (Wright, 1995), but the results are framed in Western economic terms. Also, the lack of success of labor-saving technologies and projects were due to the lack of consideration of women's multitask responsibilities (Bryceson, 1995). Finally, funding agencies were negligent for not consulting with the women themselves (Mosse, 1993). Although the WID projects focused on women, women's status had not improved.

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higher education beyond the 3rd grade, and knowledge and protection against domestic violence. In the 1980s the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) employed debt repayment programs, known as structural adjustment programs (SAPs). These programs aimed to increase the profitability of the economy by cutting back government spending on health education, child care and social welfare provisions. The result, throughout most of the debted countries, was the collapse of the formal sector as governments privatized resources from national industries to private corporations. SAPs shifted the brunt of economic problems to the poor, primarily women. The UN's Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) states: "Women have the right to have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as land resettlement schemes" (CEDAW, Article 14: 9). The programming of NGOs, such as Planned Parenthood International (PPI), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO) aid microentrepreneurs to make their own livelihoods.

WID privileged men as the responsible caretakers of the family, and their policies replicated the Westernized model of the ideal nuclear family. WID policies subordinated women's role as unpaid extras, 'subsidiaries, literally auxiliary' (Roberts, 1979 in Kabeer, 1994). Frazer (1989) refers to the 'gender sub-text' in policy (p. 149) that oppositionally positioned men and women in their respective public and private spheres, and gave each a gendered behavior, "self-interested and competitive in the market place; altruistic and cooperative within the home" (Kabeer, 1995, p. 267).

Since WID ignored gender relations in practice, it also neglected male bias within its own institutions. WID offices were staffed with policy planners who would design programs aimed to train women as significant contributors to agriculture to "enhance their competitiveness and productivity in the economy" (Kabeer, 1994, p. 21). Although women staffed these offices, they are apart of male-dominated institutions.

On the positive side, the WID project took the first step to mitigate the omission of women in development, and brought scholars, policy-makers and practitioners together to talk about women for the first time. Scholars of WID increased research to yield better data on household structures and generated more analysis of women's work in the Third World (Agarwal, 1989). WID brought "women's condition" to the global attention; WID actions contributed to the planning of the 1975 UN Year of Women and the subsequent world women's conferences.<sup>4</sup> A wellspring of international NGOs from the North and

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<sup>4</sup> The UN world conferences on women are: Mexico City, Mexico, 1975: "World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year"; Copenhagen, Denmark, 1980: "World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace"; Nairobi, Kenya, 1985: "1985 World Conference to Review and appraise the Achievements of the UN Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace"; Beijing, China 1993: "Fourth World Conference on Women: Equality, Development and Peace."

South sprang from these conferences, many of which implemented WID's three approaches.

Further WID Critique and Postmodern Contributions. Although WID's liberal feminist practitioners have come to view the limitations in modernization and WID has begun to integrate women into policy planning, scholars outside liberalism continue to critique WID practices. Social feminists argue WID is a capitalist strategy (Beneria and Sen; Chinchilla, 1977; Hartmann, 1981; Mies, 1982; Shiva, 1988; Young, 1981). However, since Marxist perspectives are rooted in material economics and Enlightenment thought, postmodernist feminists challenge the limitations of this critique.

Northern and Southern feminists from the science and social sciences (Bordo, 1989; Butler, 1992; Flax, 1987; Haraway, 1990; Harding, 1986; Mohanty, 1992) and the humanities (Anzaldúa, 1990; hooks, 1990; Minh-ha, 1987) drew from the varied perspectives of poststructuralist scholars Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jean-François Lyotard to blend aspects of postmodernism with post-colonial theorizing about race, gender, and class. Postmodern feminists assert that WID underscored the modernist discourse of colonialism and liberalism (Chowdhry, 1995, Hirschman, 1995, Lazreg, 1988, Marchand, 1995, Mohanty, 1988, Ong, 1988) and that the approach did more to extend the ideas of market economy than it did to improve women's status (Kabeer, 1995). Yet, some Third World practitioners in the field question the usefulness of postmodern feminism and invite the discourse to adapt itself to "acquire practical relevance for women" (Nzomo, 1995, p. 141). The perspective's strongest argument in its critique of WID and contribution to development is its theorizing about modernity and issues of power, difference and gender. Also, the position argues for the



“contextualization of colonial/neo-colonial discourse” (Marchand, 1995, p. 16), which challenges researchers from the North to reconceptualize their representation of Southern women and their assumptions about the superiority of the North.

Summary. In sum, like the agencies from which women's offices originated, WID became another vehicle for liberal neo-classical economics where growth was the primary goal and ultimate meaning of development. Researchers from South criticized development programming as failing to represent the economic and political power structures which govern society (Sen and Grown, 1987), and also the basic structure of power relations (Mosse, 1993, Howard, 1995). These critiques helped to move NGO activity for women towards less liberal and more radical/socialist views. Missing from these critiques, however, is the material economic system within which these dynamics exist. Views of development from a new postmodernist feminism filled this void by challenging development as systems of knowledge production. This perspective called for an inclusive approach to knowledge and “expertise,” and research that starts with “situated practices,” meaning what the women and men who participate in development have a say about it (Parpart, 1995).

#### Women and Development (WAD): A 'Women Only' Alternative Approach

By the late 1970s, an intermediary approach, Women and Development (WAD) influenced NGO policy and programming for a short period. To address the deficiencies in WID, socialist feminists combined an analysis of the impact of patriarchy with aspects of traditional Marxism (Rathgeber, 1988). WAD “celebrated women's culture,

emphasized women-only projects, and warned against close cooperation with male-dominated institutions" (Parpart, 1989).

DAWN, (Development Alternatives for Women for a New Era), a WAD NGO, was established in 1985 by Southern scholars and activists in women's issues and the environment. DAWN was a key actor in bringing forth feminist ideals to this new conceptualization of development (Braidotti, et al, 1994; Sen & Grown, 1987). DAWN created spaces for talking about new visions for Third World women based on economic and gender justice and democracy. DAWN's position was important because it unified what WID had polarized—women's private and public domains. Also, DAWN promoted women's empowerment through international and cultural change, advocated value-based development and popular education, and acknowledged the interrelationships between gender, race, class and nationality (Braidotti, et. al, 1994). Besides mobilizing a public will towards a "global support network for equitable development" (Dankelman & Davidson, 1988), DAWN provided what WID didn't, a solid critique of the dominant mode of development.

WAD's important contribution was the empowerment approach. According to this approach, when women are empowered, women are led to act more self-confidently in society, and thereby, women's status would improve. Women would have greater access to choice; fewer children and better spacing of births would lead to an improvement in health of women and children (Braidotti, et al, 1994).

Gender and Development (GAD): The Other Alternative

By the early 1970s, feminist and social theory discourse had begun to deconstruct (break apart) the individual categories of "women" and "men" along the conceptual lines of gender and sex. Oakley (1972) put forward the idea that a 'socially constructed' gender was built on a more than fundamental sex, which was biologically based. She said,

Sex is a biological term: 'gender' a psychological and cultural one. Common sense suggests that they are merely two ways of looking at the same division and that someone who belongs, to say, the female sex will automatically belong to the corresponding (feminine) gender. In reality this is not so. To be a man or a woman, a boy or a girl, is as much a function of dress, gesture, occupation, social network and personality, as it is of possessing a particular set of genitals (Oakley, 1972, p. 158).

Gender was defined as:

the process by which individuals who are born into biological categories of male or female become the social categories of men and women through the acquisition of locally-defined attributes of masculinity and femininity (Kabeer, 1991, p. 11).

"Gender identity" encompassed not only the characteristic of being "female" but also attributes such as caste, race, class, religion and political affiliation.

Meanwhile, in development practice through the 1980s, the term "gender" and its frameworks had begun to slowly influence policy planning. Development offices for women were becoming more professionalized, and more feminists from the North and South were turning to NGOs for career options. As more specialized approach to development began to evolve from these women's efforts, "gender" replaced "women" in programming. The gender strategy appeared less threatening to donor agencies on the surface, but in actuality dug deeper into structural inequities to include gender asymmetries and an analysis of power in policy planning (Rathbeger, 1995). Rather than

focusing primarily on women as recipients and beneficiaries of goods and services, the new approach called the Gender and Development (GAD), focused primarily on transforming gender differences and inequalities within households, communities and economies.

The GAD alternative represented a radical departure from the way development was commonly practiced (Burn, 2000). GAD's focus extended beyond WID's efforts to lobby for new legislation to insure equal rights, such as affirmative action strategies, legal and or traditional laws. GAD attempted to conflate class differences by building class alliances between women while acknowledging the overarching system of patriarchy under which all women and men operate. Therefore, GAD promised to work with men, as well as women, on the social construction of gender and the specific roles, responsibilities and expectations of women and men. Like WID and WAD, GAD would ensure women's integration with the economic process, but aimed to shift power by transforming the unequal social/gender relations vis-à-vis their integration into development (Braidotti, et al, 1994).

Since the mid-1980s, "gender training" has become the new NGO analysis tool, and women's funding agencies and gender policy planning agencies produced and reproduced outside gender development "experts" and specialized gender training skills. GAD kept WAD's empowerment approach and adapted social critical theory to fit the "women question" (Zimmerman, & Rappaport, 1988 Wallerstein, N. 1992). Although GAD's claims originally threatened national governments and bilateral aid agencies (Mosse, 1993, Moser, 1989); today, gender mainstreaming has become the development approach of choice by the traditional aid agencies.

GAD in Practice: More Talk than Walk? Further Postmodern Contributions.

Despite GAD's vision for a more equitable world for women, in the post 1990s wake of the United Nations world conference era controversy in theory and practice lingers regarding the usefulness of Gender and Development (GAD) approaches in discourse and practice. It's critics argue the approach is more widely represented in the academic community and within the institutional framework of development agencies than it is in on-the-ground development projects (Braidotti, 1994; Marchant & Parpart, 1995).

For example, Third World feminist scholarship, influenced by feminist postmodernist theory, observe GAD literature resembles the exclusionary practices in U.S. feminism in discourse and practice (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1990; Anzaldúa 1981; Alarcón, 1983; Collins, 1989; hooks, 1984, 1992, 1995; Lorde, 1981, 1984; Minh-ha, 1990; Moraga, 1981). GAD empowerment rhetoric states for women to gain agency by "claim(ing) time and space to re-examine their own lives," is reflective of Northern feminist values. Chandra Mohanty (1991) argues that neocolonial discourse pervades Third World Gender and Development literature, as do Western definitions of "Third World" as a political category vs. a geographic location. Aihwa Ong (1988) noted the ethnocentricity in feminism where First World women's representations of women from the Third World embodied universal feminist values whereby the "First World woman, identified as "woman," is synonymous with modern and liberated, and the "Third World" woman as the inferior, not modern and liberated woman.

These "anticolonial struggles" (Narayan, 1997) further influenced how First World and Third World feminists viewed one another and how they viewed women's concerns and gender interests (Aguilar, 1993; Chowdhry, 1995; Mohanty, 1988;

Molyneaux, 1986, 1998; Marchand and Parpart, 1995). The distinction between women's condition and women's position (Young, 1988), identified respectively as women's practical gender interests and women's strategic gender interests (Molyneaux, 1985), influenced how (Western) feminists thought about development goals. Women's material condition, access to education, health care, credit, and legal status was placed in opposition to women's social position in terms of issues such as power and subordination. The privileging of Western feminist concerns—women's strategic gender interests—over Third World women's issues (falsely) dichotomized the “women question” in discourse and in practice to create the “feminist-feminine” construct (Molyneaux, 1985; Marchand, 1995). As Marchand (1995) suggests, this construct was not exclusively North American, the elite, educated Latin American feminist agenda excludes the poor, working class women, who themselves, reject the feminist label (p. 61). This distinction is problematic not only in GAD literature, but visibly evident in the women's global conference arena.

GAD's Omission of Environment and Women and the Environment: (WED).

Early and mid GAD policy planning ignored the environment and issues of sustainability. GAD's omission of how to improve the environment's ability to meet women's needs was less neglect than it was the lack of conceptual knowledge by environmental scholars or development personnel to see the links between women and sustainability issues. While Western feminist theorizing was shaping the GAD approach, the mid-1970s "oil crisis" event and literature about the earth's limited natural resources (Meadows, et. al, 1972) raised awareness of environmental concerns to a global scale. Development planners were catapulted to look for more systematic solutions to global commons issues.

The Women and the Environment (WED) movement emerged as a theme in the global debate with planners looking to strategies for people in the South who would be depending upon wood fuel as their major energy source. The widely known Chipko Movement, a spontaneous grassroots social movement in India organized by village women protecting their forests from development planner's failed forestry and energy projects, attracted global attention. The Chipko protest against the disruption of the ecological balance from deforestation made clear how rural women are the victims global economic problems (Braidotti et al., 1994).

Increased knowledge of environmental degradation in the late 1970s and debt repayment policies created "the feminization of poverty" in early 1980s, UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) made women's participation in decision-making a policy goal as a way to move nations from the unsustainable to the sustainable path. From the late 1980s, WED 'professionals' and 'experts' from both the North and the South were charged with the task of bringing forth women's role to promoting sustainable development on the global agenda. The ecofeminist traditions, which include the two philosophical strands of cultural and social ecofeminism, were pivotal to this debate.

Cultural ecofeminism affirmed the women/nature links to the survival of nature based on women's bodily functions (Mies & Shiva, 1988). Social ecofeminism championed the environment through women's understanding of social roles and their experience with subjugation and discrimination (Merchant, 1990). Ecofeminism made important contributions to feminist theorizing on the question of women's 'essential' quality, to social movements about proclaiming a more harmonious relationship with nature, and to the "transnational structure of capitalist oppression" (Salleh, 1995 p. 21 in

Buckingham-Hatfield, 2000). In discourse, GAD writers criticized the early gender and environment literature for conflating all women into one homogenous group with disregard to class, ethnic or caste differences (Rathgeber, 1995). Women's role in resource management was minimized. GAD writers also excluded Third World research on sexual division of labor and women's responsibility in agriculture (Rathgeber, 1995).

It has not been until the post-Beijing years that literature about the relationship between women, gender and the environment has gained more prominent attention. A United Nations goal is to forge links between the eradication of poverty, sustainable development, and the empowerment of women and policy planners call for gender analysis with issues of environment and natural resource use (UN, 1995b).

#### GAD and WAD: Rethinking Gender

Feminist theorizing about gender influenced GAD, as well as women in the South's environmental practices. The GAD postmodernist scholarship that influenced Western feminism continues to shape a lively gender, women, environment and development debate. Meanwhile, in practice, development "gender experts" call for "rethinking gender" if GAD is to endure into the twenty-first century. Oxfam practitioner, Judy El-Bushra (2000) says the concept of gender, thirty years later, continues to cause confusion, and this tension still exists within the development field despite its current popularity with moderate funding agencies. She says,

'Gender' should be seen not as a politically correct ideology, but as an integral element in a wider search for a deep understanding of human behavior, which concerns itself with physical and emotional needs, perceptions, motivations, relationships and structures. Concepts such as 'identity', 'agency' and 'power' describe how human beings struggle to carve out acceptable lives for themselves in the constraints imposed by



their historical positions, their social roles and their personal attributes. If the concept of gender is to be a useful tool for development and for the advancement of women's rights, GAD research, policy and practice must direct its energies towards understanding the complex meanings of this and similar concepts, and resist promoting itself as an unquestionable good (El-Bushra, 2000, pp. 55-62).

Basically, El-Bushra echoes the discursive critique that GAD oversimplified complex issues, and for GAD to survive beyond its academic focus and to make the structural changes it promised, she suggests GAD must link gender to the social differences of age race, ethnicity and class. She doesn't address environment.

Others, (Bourque & Warren, 1990; Haraway, 1991; Harding, 1986) have explored approaches and issues to gender, science and technology. The UN has called for the greater participation of women in environmental decision-making. Geographer Buckingham-Hatfield (2000) states that

addressing environmental degradation, and addressing inequality (and not just of women, but of children, old people, ethnic minorities and communities in the developing world) have to be addressed in tandem (Susan Buckingham-Hatfield, 2000, "Gender and Environment").

The voices of indigenous people are still missing from the discussion for a systematic and systemic approach to addressing the links between women, gender, sustainability and environment to solve equity and justice issues. The greatest value derived from contributors to the GAD discussion is from the feminist postmodernist camp as some have continued to call for the inclusion of "other voices."

## Conclusion

Section 1 outlined the evolution of theorizing about women's role in the development enterprise from the early 1990s to present and followed the evolution of

development policy planning approaches. The purpose of the section was to provide a basic understanding of the history of the development conditions that led two NGOs to partner and implement an early GAD project for indigenous women and men in three different countries. Additionally, the section revealed the conflicts, limitations and challenges between and within approaches. The following section presents the conceptual frameworks for the 1989 “Traditional Media as Change Agent” project that this case study evaluates.

### 1989 TMCA Context: Institutional Interactions Leading to the Project

#### Introduction

It is instructional to explore the institutional, behind the scenes, arrangements of the 1989 UNIFEM/BIC partnership and for several reasons. First, this information provides context for the TMCA participants’ perceptions of the project successes and failures. Secondly, the description answers one study question about the institutional arrangements of the BIC and how the philosophy and ideology of the Baha’i Faith influenced the implementation of this project. Also, the section sheds light on the “top-down” and “bottom-up” procedures and reciprocities of an implementation of an international initiative in grassroots communities with local institutional cooperation.

To begin, the section briefly introduces global politics that led to the growth of NGOs, the original key players in the particular NGO partnership of concern to this case and explains their goals. Then, the section explains the chronology of events that led to the BIC/UNIFEM partnership and outlines the internal mechanisms within the Baha’i International Community.

## Background

Transnational Social Movement Organizations (TSMOs) emerged in the latter half of the nineteenth century, first, to respond to the prevention of war and the control of arms races and later, to foster economic and social justice and human rights. The emergence of these transboundary networks of citizens' groups concerned with the human well being on a global scale gave rise to new women's groups during the late 1800s (Boulding, 1995). The World Young Women's Christian Association, the World Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the International Council of Nurses, and the International Council of Women were the first groups to respond specifically to war, slavery, economic injustice and the misery of the urban poor (Reardon, 1993) and worked broadly towards educating women and children. After WW I, the early promoters of the failed League of Nations formed the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. After the conservative, right-wing back-lash slowed the growth of women's organizations during the early mid-1900s, the United Nations was finally established as the international body through which nation-states, private citizens and TSMOs would create a transnational network of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, complex webs of NGOs reach across continents and into communities to play a critical role in the struggle for a democratic global civic society.

The two international NGOs who partnered to implement the project this research studies grew from this context. UNIFEM, the funding agency within the UN family for women's empowerment and gender equity and the BIC, the advocacy arm for the Baha'i Faith, are two international NGOs who work to strengthen the rights of women and the girl child in rural regions throughout the world.

Baha'i International Community (BIC)

The BIC is a faith-based international non-governmental organization that serves as the advocacy arm of the Baha'i Faith,<sup>5</sup> a religious organization with membership throughout the world. The BIC holds consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and with the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF). The BIC works with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP). The BIC endorses multilateral institutional cooperation and participates actively in the UN restructuring process. Its position towards global governance encourages constructive change through justice, peace and equity. In addition, the BIC has worked closely with the Commission on the Status of Women since 1974 to improve the status of women and to promote their advancement throughout the world.

The BIC notion of sustainability is tied to the philosophy of human beings as essentially spiritual and to principles of economics as fundamentally a spiritual activity. Arthur Dahl (1996), the former deputy assistant executive director for UNEP, said in his paper on "Spiritual Dimensions of Sustainable Development":

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<sup>5</sup> The Baha'i Faith originated in what was then Persian in the mid-1800s. The Prophet founder of the religion was Baha'u'llah, which translated into English means "The Glory of God" and shares a complex and prophetic historical relationship with previous religions as does Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, and Hinduism to one another. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* recognizes the Baha'i Faith as the second most geographically widespread religion after Christianity. Across Asia, Africa, Latin America, North America, East and Western Europe, and the Oceanic countries, the six million members of Baha'i communities are comprised of highly diverse women, men, youth and children from a range of ethnic, class, age and former religious backgrounds. These communities rally around the pivotal philosophical and spiritual view of the oneness of humankind, and make clear the role of the equality of the sexes in the achievement of the complete elimination of war. They promote a set of notions that support the vision that human's social well-being is revealed in progressive stages to humanity through "messengers." According to this view, the era in which we live presently calls for the creation of "mutually beneficial ties of economic interdependence, the elimination of prejudice in all forms, and which exhorts individuals to trustworthiness, to high moral standards in their individual lives, and to the voluntary sharing of wealth" (Hansen, 1992). According to Arthur Dahl, the deputy assistant executive director for the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) and a member of this organization, this central concept of "unity, based on justice, (is) the principle to govern all human relationships" (Dahl, 1996).

The concept of sustainability expresses an ethical position of justice and solidarity within and between generations. It condemns present actions that place a burden on or reduce the possibilities available to future generations. It thus requires a long-term view and an integrated perspective of the whole human and natural system. Sustainability also requires moderation. As Bahá'u'lláh warned over a hundred years ago, "if carried to excess, civilization will prove as prolific a source of evil as it had been of goodness when kept within the restraints of moderation." It is clear today that the natural systems of this planet have only a limited capacity to absorb the impacts of modern society, and many human development activities must be moderated to remain within those limits (p.2).

In contrast to the materialistic Marxist and capitalist view, development from the Baha'i perspective is not a goal; development is an organic process in which "the spiritual is expressed and carried out in the material" ('Abdu'l-Bahá, 1969) and is viewed a means for humanity's upliftment. The Baha'i Writings suggest "the fundamentals of the whole economic condition are divine in nature and are associated with the world of the heart and spirit" and that "the economic solution is divine in nature" ('Abdu' l-Bahá, 1982). The BIC promotes the fundamental change in thinking and behaving from material greed and mastery over nature to develop the values that increase spiritual cooperation and interdependency with the natural world.

### UNIFEM

In 1975, the United Nations embarked on its second major achievement for women<sup>6</sup> when it created the International Women's Year. The Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade was renamed UNIFEM (United Nations International Fund for

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<sup>6</sup> The UN Women's Commission on the Status of Women in 1948 is considered the first major achievement for women.

Women) and was one of two new UN autonomous affiliates to advance women and to support grassroots initiatives (United Nations, 1995). UNIFEM would become the agency responsible for providing financial assistance to the direct, practical work of women in developing countries. UNIFEM became the technical and support agency within the UN system to not only advance the development interests of women, but to train and work with NGOs and government groups to incorporate a gender perspective. UNIFEM is known as a leading resource and knowledge provider on women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming (UN, 2000).<sup>7</sup>

#### BIC/UNIFEM Partnership

In 1988, the BIC presented a statement paper to the 32<sup>nd</sup> session of the UN Commission on the Status of women held in Austria on the issues facing rural women, such as food, water resources, agricultural technology, rural employment and transportation and environment (Appendix B).<sup>8</sup> The position responded to the limitations in WID's material

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<sup>7</sup> UNIFEM's 2000 report on the progress of women in the world identifies four factors to women's empowerment. These are:

- Acquiring knowledge and understanding of gender relations and ways in which these relations may be changed;
- Developing a sense of self-worth, a belief in one's ability to secure desired changes and the right to control one's life;
- Gaining the ability to generate choices and exercise bargaining power;
- Developing the ability to organize and influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally (UNIFEM, 2000).

<sup>8</sup> The BIC position paper emphasized that... "rarely, do documents, research activities, and projects designed for development address the need to change basic attitudes that reinforce acceptance of the inequality of the roles women are given in most society. ...The attitudes of society towards women regulate their lives, determine their activities, prescribe their limitations and outline their responsibilities and duties" (BIC, 1995). The paper suggested that men may benefit from shifting gender "Frequently, an important message may need to be directed towards a group that is not the beneficiary. A primary target for communication related to development projects for women may well be men" (BIC, 1988).

solutions to economic problems and to WAD's women-only activities as a way of improving status. Mona Grieser of Global Visions, Inc. (GLOVIS) drafted the paper for the BIC. In personal communication about the paper, she stated:

(WID programs) may have been improving the lives of women and children (health and nutrition projects and a few enterprise development programs), but they were not really disturbing the status quo whereby women's roles and status remained unchanged at the end of the project cycle (personal communication, July, 2000).

The BIC recommended two practical steps towards achieving a climate of awareness for social change for women: to use traditional and popular mass communication media, such as folk theater, songs and puppetry and to encourage the education of girls.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, the paper suggested that "altering attitudes and behaviors towards women and women-related issues" may involve men in the process (BIC, 1988).

The underlying philosophy for the BIC position stemmed from three core spiritual principles of the Baha'i teachings. First, the selection of qualitative PAR methods was based on the principle that the art of consultation is a means to achieving unity and justice in a community. Secondly, the principle of the equality of women and men called for men to be integral members of a community process to identify problems associated with gender attitudes and women's low status. Thirdly, since development was viewed as a

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<sup>9</sup> Drawing upon little known development research for that time, the BIC noted the important role mass media played in altering the lives of the individual and the collective by sending the appropriate and socially responsible message. Communication projects of that time, whose aims to change attitudes towards issues such as diarrhea and family planning, were shown to be effective particularly when cultural norms were counterintuitive to the issue. Communication projects conveyed important messages not just towards the beneficiary, women, but towards others who impact women, specifically men. Grieser (1988) noted: A mutually reinforcing relationship arises when individual initiative, as shown by women participating in women's programmes, is supported by the village. This process of developing a community spirit to support and fortify individual efforts on the part of women is brought about through an education and communication programme, which precedes project activities. It is the effort to achieve such a progressive, dynamic and, above all, harmonious relationship that characterizes Baha'i programmes of social development.

capacity building process whereby the people for whom development is aimed are primary contributors, the change-based project proposed that the problem-solving and conceptual skills be sustainable and transferable (Grieser, 1997).

UNIFEM<sup>10</sup> invited the BIC to develop a multi-country proposal for the empowerment of women for two reasons—the BIC included a gender analysis and its complex web of institutional cooperation from the international to the grassroots level.<sup>11</sup> The partnership was historic for four reasons. First, the BIC's position marked one of the earlier GAD statements to be presented to the Women's Commission; secondly, UNIFEM funded one of their first GAD projects; thirdly, it would be the first international development partnership for the BIC. Finally, according to Noeleen Heyzer, the present director of UNIFEM, the strategic cooperation between the two organizations met international development goals of equality and social and ecological sustainability (Heyzer in Brooke, 1996). The project, designed by GLOVIS, was called "Traditional Media as Change Agent" (TMCA) (Grieser, 1989).

Lines of Action within the BIC for the UNIFEM/BIC Collaboration. The international governing body for the worldwide Baha'i community is the Universal House of Justice (UHJ), located in Haifa, Israel. Figure 1 illustrates the direction and administration within the Baha'i community from the international to local level.<sup>12</sup>

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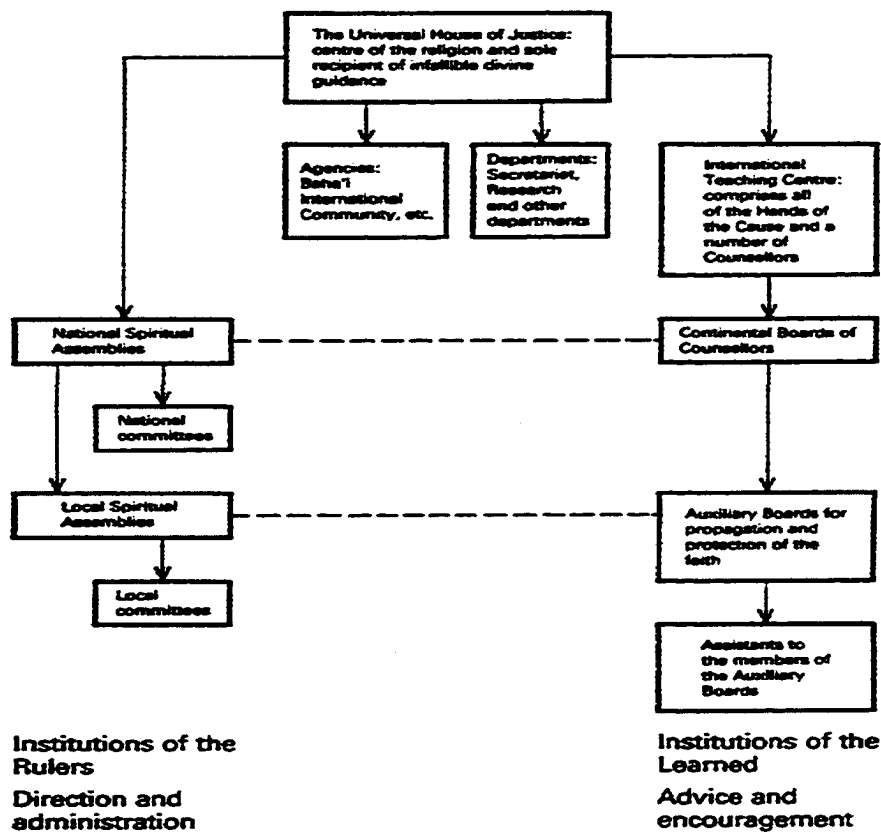
<sup>10</sup> Margaret Snyder was the executive director of UNIFEM during this time.

<sup>11</sup> In the late 1980s, five years before the world women's conference in Beijing, the idea of NGO partnerships was relatively new but gaining in popularity as a positive strategy for attaining UN goals. Since the local and national capacity of the BIC was maturing, it was eager to embark on a project of international stature; they accepted the invitation with the additional recommendation of a multi-country approach. The BIC hoped to "learn from the application of principle to different cultures, then we could learn the best way to proceed with future programming" (Grieser, personal conversation, 2000).

<sup>12</sup> The Universal House of Justice, located in Haifa, Israel, is comprised of nine individuals from over 160 countries who are democratically elected by a set of unique electoral and consultative principles that are



Figure 1.  
Baha'i Administrative Order



Following the UNIFEM invitation, the BIC consulted with the UHJ, which determined that the project met the social and economic development criteria and

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democratic in spirit. The administrative order was created by Bahá'u'lláh, and was established by His successors 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. The design of the administration is organized according to a pattern of cooperative decision-making and social interaction that cultivates the moral and creative capacities latent in human nature. It provides a model of the institutional structures necessary for global community life—a pattern of living that embraces diversity and fosters mutuality of purpose, compassion, and rectitude of conduct. A unique feature of this administrative system is the balance it strikes between preserving individual freedom and promoting the collective good. The governing councils are called “Houses of Justice” which operate at the local, national, and international levels. This hierarchy devolves decision-making to the lowest practicable level, which allows for full grassroots participation in local governance with global links. (Baha'i World, <http://www.bahai.org/article-1-3-0-6.html>).

recommended that the newly established Office for Social and Economic Development (OSED) oversee the project.<sup>13</sup>

Since the Baha'i vision for SED begins with "the natural stirrings of the grassroots" and strengthening local capacity, OSED was eager but cautious to oversee the project (Grieser, Hazelwood, personal conversation, 2000).<sup>14</sup> OSED contacted the National Spiritual Assemblies (NSA) throughout the world, the middle level of administrative order (Appendix C). The criteria<sup>15</sup> for NSA selection was

- expressed interest, low status of women and the commitment to the principle of enhancing women's status,
- diversity within and between countries,
- the NSA's ability to plan, manage and implement SED projects,
- the support of identified local individuals to the Participatory Rapid Assessment techniques, consultation processes, and participatory evaluation techniques (BIC, 1991).

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<sup>13</sup> OSED was established in 1983 by the UHJ to meet the growing need for the systematic coordination and organization of technical and spiritual guidance for "Baha'i-inspired" and "Baha'i-sponsored" SED projects throughout the world. The purpose of the office was to "ensure a deeper consolidation of the community at all levels," which would "incorporate social and economic development processes into the regular pursuits" of daily life (OSED, 1993). The UNIFEM/BIC partnership was to be OSED's first experience as fiscal agent for an internationally funded development project.

<sup>14</sup> According to Grieser (2000), OSED had three initial concerns. Its first concern was fiscal, that money would be brought into what was "essentially, a spiritual activity" and "how it would test" the community; second, lack of infrastructure since the WID office that was established at the BIC in 1990 was fundamentally an advocacy office and not one for development implementation; and thirdly, that the mandate of the UN did not stretch to giving money to an NGO founded in Israel. OSED "saw the project as a way of strengthening the Assemblies to become a more prominent player in the lives of the community members" (Grieser, 2000, personal communication).

<sup>15</sup> The European countries were eliminated since UNIFEM's mandate is to work in developing countries. Nigeria and Brazil, were partially funded by the UHJ.

Of the eleven Third World countries to respond, Cameroon, Malaysia, and Bolivia were accepted.<sup>16</sup> The specific criteria for Bolivia's selection included its access to a Baha'i-owned radio station that supports radio programming in indigenous tongues and its annual traditional music festival, the strength of assembly to consult, manage, implement and evaluate a project, and the development needs of local community that touch on women's status, health, environment, water and sanitation (Grieser, personal communication, 2000).

Local Institutional Cooperation. TMCA was designed to place local implementation responsibility in the hands of the local Baha'i institutions, highly decentralized decision-making bodies called Local Spiritual Assemblies (LSA).<sup>17</sup> As grassroots agencies, the LSAs are responsible for the spiritual, social and material well being of the local community—the Baha'i community as well as the greater community in which it is embedded. In the 1989 TMCA project, the LSA members were to be trained and sensitized to:

- the use of communication and the techniques of consultation as a development tool;
- manage and implement behavior change projects;

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<sup>16</sup> In May of 1989, Hassan Sabri, on behalf of OSED, sent a letter to twenty strong NSAs, including Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, the islands of Fiji, India, Ireland, Italy, Lesotho, Liberia, Malaysia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Swaziland, Zaire and the Zambia. OSED emphasized the importance of women's role and the relationship between women's equality and the advancement of society at large. Although the notion of the equality of women and men and the importance of the role of women is a fundamental teaching of the Baha'i Faith, the letter was historic because it fostered an "understanding of the status of women," and the status of women as "a subject for international consultation" (Grieser, 2000, personal communication).

<sup>17</sup> The LSAs, like the NSAs and the Universal House of Justice, are comprised of nine elected individuals from within one local community. The election process to the LSA avoids campaign or electioneering and is conducted in silence and prayer. Criteria is based on residence and commitment to the goals of the Baha'i community and not on education, literacy or previous experience.

- coordinate future sustainable community activities of women's concerns and needs;
- encourage suggestions for solving women's problems.

The local institutions were expected to draw upon local resources and not rely upon external assistance (UNIFEM/BIC Project Documentation, 1991). In Bolivia specifically, the LSAs were encouraged to solicit and coordinate efforts with the *Sindicato*, Bolivia's union.

Selection of Local Project Coordinators. The NSA solicited recommendations from the LSAs throughout the country for the selection of a local coordinator. The Project Director requested that the coordinator only have knowledge of the language and a familiarity with the culture; development experience or knowledge was not a prerequisite. At that time, Teresa Fox, an urban, educated Bolivian woman with Quechua and Spanish background, was a member of the NSA and the LSA of Sucre.<sup>18</sup> Teresa was trained as a teacher, was currently unemployed, and volunteered for the position. She met the criteria for the position and the NSA named her coordinator of the project. Although the Project Director requested one coordinator and the NSA approved her appointment, her husband, an American living in Bolivia for 20 years, became co-coordinator and her children, ranging in age from 3 to 8, accompanied her on every village visit.

Local Site Selection. The Project Director requested that each country select multiple sites from diverse geographic and economic regions to generate strong cross-cultural comparisons and for cost effectiveness, however the NSA of Bolivia decided to

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<sup>18</sup> In Bolivia, the *escuela normal*, a teacher's college, offers a two-year teacher training degree. Teresa had worked in Bolivian schools, and then with her American husband, established an English language school and a "homeschool" where they accepted tuition students.

move forward with one community. Letters were sent to communities within the jurisdiction of Local Spiritual Assemblies to solicit interest. A number of communities responded with interest and the decision for local site selection rested with the project coordinators.<sup>19</sup> After the first year, the project coordinator asked OSED for permission to expand to other communities. OSED suggested to the BIC to include other communities, where upon it seems the NSA agreed.<sup>20</sup>

### Additional Conceptual Frameworks: Systems Theory

The 1989 TMCA project had its “roots in systems and chaos theory” and used a non-linear model with complex feedback loops. Also, the main feature of the project was “resiliency rather than stability” (Grieser, 1991). Resiliency is associated with “the ability to thrive, mature, and increase competence in the face of adverse circumstances or obstacles” (Gordon, 1996).

A systems thinking worldview is based on relationships, synergy and is contextual in scope. In a system’s view, “the essential properties of an organism, or living system, are properties of the whole, which none of the parts have. They arise from the interactions and relationships among the parts (Capra, 1995, “The Web of Life,” p. 29).

Kauffman (1980) defines a system as collection of parts, which interact with each other to function as a whole. Fundamental to understanding how systems “work” is the

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<sup>19</sup> The local coordinators had selected the rural community of Poroma located about five hours from Sucre. According to Bruce Fox, the expedition to explore Poroma failed due to a flat tire and the community in which they stopped, Phoqonchi, “didn’t want anything in return” as did some of the others (Fox, 2000, personal communication). Also, “Phoqonchi seemed to have all the right elements and it was a distance we could travel (Fox, personal communication, 2000).

<sup>20</sup> The additional communities were Angostura, Tallawanka, Puka Puka and Sucre.

notion of reading information from inputs, outputs and feedback; the dynamics of their interrelationships. To analyze a system, Kofman and Senge (1993) emphasize the importance of the whole. They say:

The defining characteristic of a system is that it cannot be understood as a function of its isolated components. First, the behavior of the system doesn't depend on what each part is doing but on how each part is interacting... Second, to understand a system we need to understand how it fits into the larger system of which it is a part ... Third, and most important, what we call the parts need not be taken as primary. In fact, how we define the parts is fundamentally a matter of perspective and purpose, not intrinsic in the nature of the 'real thing' we are looking at (Kofman and Senge, 1993, p. 27).

According to systems theory, there are three distinct levels to view reality: events, patterns of behavior, and systemic structure. Western civilization, with its focus on *a priori* and ahistorical dates and places, is event-driven. Senge (1990) says that “event explanations of who did what to whom” doom their holders to a reactive stance toward change. The patterns of behavior over time, on the other hand, explore long-term trends and assess their implications—they suggest how, over time, we can respond to shifting conditions and adapt learning (McNamara, 2000). The systemic structure refers to the deepest level of social systems where the construction of ideas assigns value to worth of particular groups or people.

A development project is an event. In a linear view of the world, such as those used in mechanistic models (e.g., the Western view of history), large effects require large causes, such as world wars and arms escalation. In a development context, the success of a project is generally measured by large, aggregate change where the larger the effect can mean the greater the refunding and merits. From the perspective of systems and chaos theory, on the other hand, the complex/adaptive systems feedback allows the creation of a

chain-reaction so that very small causes can amplify into large effects. Therefore, all effects can be caused by a small impetus (Senge, 1990). A systems approach to changes in behavior over time considers the characteristics, patterns and trends of the change and their relationships.

In this study, I stepped into an unfamiliar setting ten years after the 1989 UNIFEM/BIC “Traditional Media as Change Agent” event to look at the changes in behavior that occurred over time to explore the dynamics and resiliency of the local system and its relationship to other larger systems. Instead of looking at the 1989 TMCA project as one event that changed peoples’ lives, I viewed the changes in behaviors and attitudes towards women’s roles and gender as leverage points that could explain how individuals adapted, resisted and responded in mutually reciprocal ways to community adaptation and resistance. Additionally, I brought the understanding that there were too many systemic variables in Bolivia—cholera epidemics, poverty, the colonization of minds, political and economic instability, i.e., a “war against water rights,” neoliberalism, adaptations to modernization—that influenced change and the perception of change. Finally, my use of a feminist participatory research framework was enhanced by my understanding of how systems operate, in this case within families and communities, and within the complex dynamics of ethnicity, class and gender.

To conduct feminist Participatory Action Research, Maguire (1987) recommends the researcher “familiarize and educate ourselves about feminist theories and practices” in order to understand one’s position to oppressive systems (p. 213). An application of systems theory to practice of systemic exclusion enables the researcher to better understand how power is enacted. Systems theory is a useful tool to help the researcher

understand her or his position with regards to patriarchy and racism, both in regards to the research itself as well as within the greater PAR community. In conducting a cross-cultural study, systems theory is a useful tool for critically analyzing gender relations and for empowering women to come forth to tell their stories in a participatory setting.

Finally, the capacity for a systems worldview is a necessary requirement for conducting a study that looks at the complex transnational policies, arrangements, mechanisms and levels of cooperation between international development agencies, national institutions and local, grassroots organizations. Global politics and transnational arrangements resemble family and community systems but on a larger scale and in a greater time span.

### Conclusion

The development context for the 1989 TMCA project was situated in a historic moment in the development trends for women and in a specific time for UNIFEM, the BIC and global politics for women. Although the 1989 TMCA project claimed replicability in any cultural context, it is instructive to explore the particularities of the setting to better understand how the project influenced the lives of Quechua Indians living in remote, rural villages in the Bolivian *altiplano* region of Chuquisaca. The next chapter sets the context for the case study.



## CHAPTER II

### THE CONTEXT OF THE CASE STUDY

*It could be any one of a number of villages along the Bolivian altiplano. Pigs and cows mingle together, seemingly oblivious to the striking beauty of the nearby mountains and the bright blue sky. Farmers work peacefully, tilling what seem to be plentiful plots of land. The vivid pink of abuyayos on women's backs dot the country landscape. But beneath the idyllic, quaint surface seen by tourists and city folk just passing by on their way to Lake Titicaca, Ran Roque has a story to tell. And this story isn't a fairy tale; rather, it's a harsh account of the reality of being poor. And, unfortunately, this story is not unique; villages and towns across the nation have similar tales to share (Arrington, 2000b, Bolivia Times).*

#### Geography: The Bereft Lands of Bolivia

Referred to as the Tibet of the western hemisphere, Bolivia is an impoverished landlocked nation of eight million.<sup>1</sup> The story of Bolivia's conquest and colonial past shapes the current environmental conditions. The country was originally rich in its natural resources, a benefit enjoyed first by the Incan Empire and later by the Spaniards, who extracted minerals to fund the economic prosperity of Spain and sixteenth century Europe. Despite Bolivia's independence in 1825, the exploitation of minerals had rendered the original inhabitants of these lands bereft. The memory of conquest is pervasive among the indigenous peoples, and development practices evoke the past. A tri-lingual Quechua man interviewed for this research said:

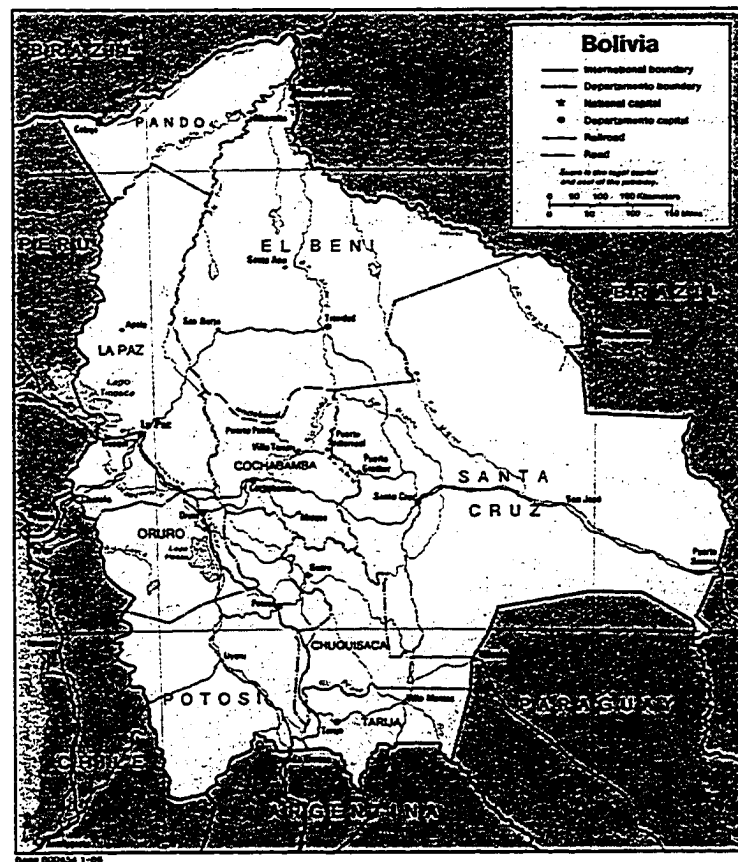
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<sup>1</sup> Bolivia lost its water access to Chile after the War of the Pacific (1879-84).

They (the Quechua or Aymara) think that all foreigners only come to negotiate some kind of deal. People in my neighborhood think that foreign people come to take advantage of them. Not everyone, but some. Maybe it's from an old mental model that since the conquerors came from another country, they still think everyone is out to take something (Epifanio, personal communication, 2000).

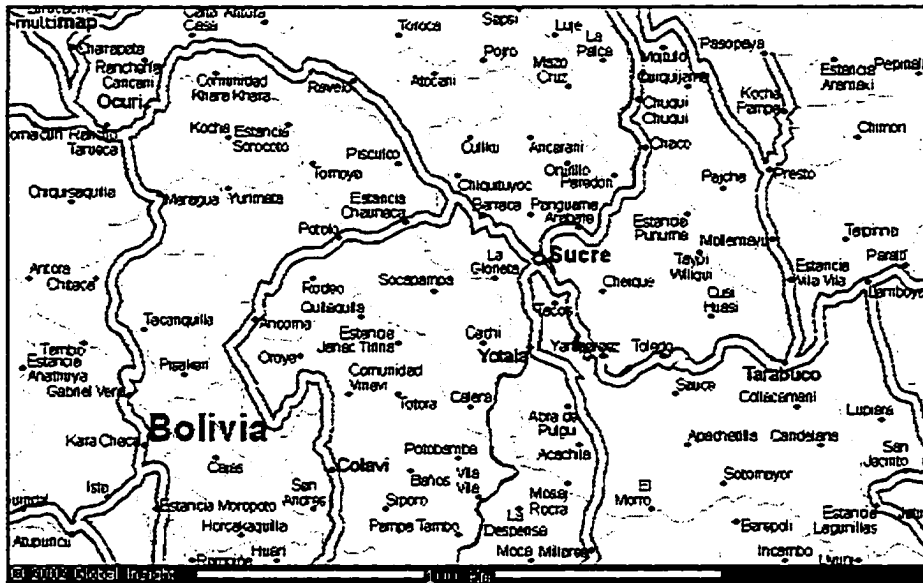
Bolivia is divided into nine departments, each of which is divided into provinces, regions and localities (Figure 2).

Figure 2  
Map of the Nine Departments of Bolivia



This case study is situated in the Department of Chuquisaca, located in the central southern *Cordillera Central* area and contains 10 provinces and 118 regions (Figure 3).

Figure 3  
Map of the Department of Chuquisaca



At a 9000-foot elevation, Sucre is the largest city in the Chuquisaca department. The remote, rural communities that were selected as the sites for the 1989 TMCA project surround the Sucre region at a 12- to 50-mile radius. Although the Chuquisaca region is more central and at a lower elevation than, for example, the higher *altiplano* regions of La Paz at 12,500 feet, the region is considered more poor and considerably less accessible because the Spaniards established the latter as a trade route, first for gold, and secondly for silver. A combination of the collapse of Bolivia's mineral

extraction, environmental erosion damage, and the structural oppression of the indigenous people, left Chuquisaca as one of the poorest regions in the country.

The climate of Bolivia ranges from semi-tropical in the lowlands to above freezing in high mountainous regions. The two seasons are winter and summer with summer rains from about October to March. Rainfall ranges from 20 inches in the semiarid south to over 60 inches in the verdant hot and humid lowlands. Chuquisaca climate is temperate and ranges from moderate to warm.

### Politics and Economics

#### Poverty in Bolivia Considered “Disastrous”

Bolivia’s persistent rural poverty is due to its highly dispersed population scattered throughout the vast mountainous or forested terrain (Andersen, 2002). Seven out of ten Bolivians live in standards the UNDP identifies as “extreme poverty.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Poverty, a relative term, has less to do with money than it does with what money can do. The boundaries between natural poverty and human-made poverty are fluid, and the definitions of poor and poverty in English are “treacherous and deceptive” (Seabrook, 1999). According to UNDP Human Development Report, absolute poverty is defined according to an absolute minimum standard, often called the ‘poverty line’. Relative poverty means that one is poor in relation to others. Income poverty (‘less than a dollar a day’, for example), means that one is poor if one has less money than the defined poverty line for the specific country. Human poverty takes into account other factors, such as life expectancy, infant malnutrition, illiteracy and lack of food or clean water. Basic needs definitions also go beyond money, to include all the things that a person needs in order to survive – including employment and participation in society. UNDP uses the Human Poverty Index to measure these illusive definitions of poverty and ranks according to three main areas of deprivation: survival; knowledge and a decent standard of living. In the industrial world, where the Index also includes social exclusion, some 7 to 17% of the populations are classified as poor. The higher the percentage figure, the greater the poverty in that country. In a feature article on lack of health services for women in the rural areas, Minal Chande reports that “55 percent of births were attended by a health professional and a mere 67 percent had access to basic health services. At least 75 percent of maternal deaths occurred during pregnancy or delivery. Main causes of maternal death were hemorrhage, induced abortion, and hypertension. The Bolivian Ministry of Health (MOH) estimates that about 30 percent of maternal deaths are attributable to abortion, which is most prevalent among married women with several children.”

During this research period, a Bolivian newspaper reported that “5% of the rural population are considered ‘not poor,’ 26% are considered ‘poor,’ and the remaining 69% are considered ‘indigent’” (Arrington, 2000). The same article reported that the department of Potosí, to the southwest of Chuquisaca, was “the poorest place on the face of the planet” with 98.5% poverty ranking. In some municipalities in the Chuquisaca region where the development project that this research study evaluates was implemented, conditions are said to be equal or worse than those in Potosí. For example, one village near the 1989 TMCA implementation is listed on the United Nations poverty index as destitute at 98.7%, and by the Bolivians, is regarded as the poorest in the whole of Bolivia.

One interview subject with expertise in international relations said the conditions in the rural areas of Bolivia, such as those in Chuquisaca, are “the most disastrous anywhere, apart from famine areas like the sub-Sahara when it is in a crisis” (Hazelwood, 2000, personal communication). The World Bank compares social indicators in Bolivia to those of Sub-Saharan Africa countries (World Bank 2001). During this research period, the life expectancy for women in this region reached 43.6 years, with the death rate 602 out of every 1,000, compared to 274 per 1,000 in the city. The infant mortality rates in the rural, mountainous areas are 90 per 1,000. Bolivia ranks second among Latin American countries for its maternal mortality rate with 39 per 100,000 births between 1989 and 1994. In highly indigenous regions of the *Altiplano* region where this study was located, the figure reached as high as 929 per

100,000 for the same period. Only forty-eight percent of women have access to or use contraception<sup>3</sup> (Chande, 2002).

Homes are built from adobe where 66.5 percent of families possess one bedroom, 55% have four or more people living in that bedroom, and 15% share with seven or more inhabitants. Sixty-five percent of the population uses water directly from rivers and lakes. The indigenous Bolivians suffer from alarming rates of malnutrition, and diarrhea and parasites are common, as are chronic conditions. Eighty-five percent of the population doesn't have access to health services, and those who do, don't have the resources to pay for a doctor. Seventy-nine percent of the women who work in the country are doing so without a paid salary or any benefits, and 19 percent of the women in the country are single parents in their homes (Arrington, 2000).<sup>4</sup> The estimated average level of income per capita is estimated to be \$1,010 per year, and four out of ten people live on less than \$2.00 per day in Bolivia (World Bank, 2000).

### From Invasion to Inflation

In order to understand the country's solution to its huge economic problems, it is important to be aware of Bolivia's colonial past. The study of development in nations with strong colonial pasts, where indigenous populations were decimated by

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<sup>3</sup> In a feature article on lack of health services for women in the rural areas, Minal Chande reports that "55 percent of births were attended by a health professional and a mere 67 percent had access to basic health services. At least 75 percent of maternal deaths occurred during pregnancy or delivery. Main causes of maternal death were hemorrhage, induced abortion, and hypertension. The Bolivian Ministry of Health (MOH) estimates that about 30 percent of maternal deaths are attributable to abortion, which is most prevalent among married women with several children."

<sup>4</sup> Figures are according to Clara Flores, former national representative from Potosi and one of the founders of the National Political Forum for Women.

disease and/or subordinated by slavery, emphasizes the inextricable links between politics and economy. From the Spanish invasion of the Andes in 1532 to the present, the boundaries between Bolivia's political history and its economy have run thin with disastrous effects on the Andean peoples. The *conquistadores* viewed the complex Andean civilization as "an alien and barbaric political structure" and created "a new colonial order to provide economic support for the motherland and to permit those who came to make their fortune" (Rasnake, 1988). On the broken backs of the indigenous populations, Bolivia became a leading exporter of silver and tin. But, in Bolivia's luck ran out in 1985 with the crash of the world tin market.

After a roller-coaster ride with hyperinflation and New Economic Policies (NEP) to rectify a "deficit-ridden economic" (NACLA, 1991), by the late 1990's, Bolivia was one of the countries most indebted to the World Bank and was, at the time of this writing, the second largest producer of coca for the international drug at market.<sup>5</sup> To understand current development policies in Bolivia, the nature of its debt, and its movement towards sustainability, we have to first understand Bolivia's history, which is one plagued by political instability evidenced by multiple coups, hyperinflation, and new neo-liberal economic development policies.

### Rethinking the 1952 Revolution

The discussion of Bolivia's tumultuous contemporary past begins in 1952 with the violent overthrow of the oligarchy by the Populist Party, the MNR (*Movimiento*

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<sup>5</sup> During this research period and throughout 2001, U.S.AID intensified efforts in the war on drugs" through coca reappropriation policies to reduce Bolivia's competition on the open drug market. Despite the

*Nacionalista Revolucionario*). The revolutionary nationalists “liberated” the indigenous people from serfdom and nationalized the tin mines and national industries. Their ability to gain enormous strength was without difficulty. Their success was attributed to a disintegrating political system and an economic situation characterized by a high inflation rate, depletion of the tin resources, increased production and declining prices in the export market. In addition, a lack of capital in the agricultural sector, increased food costs, unequal distribution of land and a growing tension from Bolivia’s “free” labor further contributed to the full support of the indigenous populations in the struggle for “freedom.” Following the three day revolution, the new government nationalized the mines first, and freed the two-thirds indigenous people from serfhood under *hacienda* ownership, a twentieth century form of enslavement; in its second year, the new government imposed land reform policies (Carter, 1971; Malloy & Thurn, 1971; Andrade, 1976). Historian Herbert Klein (1982) says, “In one stroke, the Indian peasant masses were enfranchised, and the voting population jumped from some 200,000 to just under 1 million” (p. 232). Bolivia was propelled forward on an uncharted course towards the formation of a modern nation.

The events are now legendary and, in the wake of Bolivia’s rising privatization, are remembered with ambivalence and doubt. Although the aims of the revolution were ambitious at best, its protagonists are critiqued over time as having waged a “bourgeois takeover(s) of the state apparatus” (Luykx, 1999, p. 3). They were revolutionaries turned counterelites, unable to meet the needs of their impatient working class, but who

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continued struggle of local farmers to resist these efforts and the significant losses incurred by the local economy, the “war” in Bolivia is considered a “victory.”



placed stepping stones for subsequent military dictatorships and who built rocky paths towards the long road to democracy.

Following the revolution, Latin America's largest, and most powerfully organized labor movement of workers and *campesinos* emerged to fight against exploitation by the leaders of state-run mining companies, primarily the Bolivian Mining Co-operative (COMIBOL).<sup>6</sup> Union efforts were short-lived—a fast and furious rolling administration of military dictatorships and U.S. supported conservatives, one after the other, followed the collapse of MNR and weakened the labor movement and therefore the growing working class.

These conditions earned Bolivia the attention of the U.S government, who was looking for a cold war anti-fascist political stronghold in Latin America. With sizeable aid from the U.S. government—one hundred million dollars—the U.S. provided Bolivia with the economic security it needed to proceed to its next stage in economic development (Klein, 1982). State violence and repression of dissent, supported by the U.S., lasted until 1982, when subsequent political administrations, from both the right and the left, finally embraced and employed economic strategies of capitalization, beginning with the partial privatization of former state companies.

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<sup>6</sup> The conditions of these mines and the exclusion of women within the indigenous resistance movement are revealed in *testimonio* by Domitila Barrios de Chungara (1978).

Globalization and Bolivia's New Theology—Neoliberalism<sup>7</sup>

The ideals of capitalization are aimed toward trade liberalization, privatization of resources, the reduction and elimination of state-subsidized social services, the reduction of jobs and wages, and the removal of labor rights. Consequently, the country's labor movement has continued to break down within the past twenty years. By the early 1990s, Bolivia had cut 45,000 jobs in state mining and public administration. Thirty-five thousand more jobs were eliminated due to free import policies closing factories.

As a consequence of this massive job reduction, Andean women, one-third of whom are heads of households, and who were already marginalized within the national system, turned to selling in the informal sector as street vendors, domestic service work, and self-employment in a country where union support, health care and benefits are non-existent. To help offset family loss of income, child labor increased 60% since 1985 (North American Congress on Latin America, 1991). In 2000, one newspaper stated, "For many in Bolivia, living is a fight for survival, a constant battle just to get through the day" (Arrington, 2000b).

Since, a new religion of neoliberalism has emerged in Bolivia, one some are now calling "the new economic theology" of Latin America. In 1995, when the rightist Hugo Banzer Suarez took the presidency for the second time, the government

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<sup>7</sup> Neoliberalism is an economic ideology founded in the origins of the classical theories of liberalism. Neoliberal economic policies include an expansion of market trade through temporal and spatial dimensions to include longer trading hours and new global locations. Neoliberalism benefits transnational corporations and threatens the livelihood of workers, farmers, and small businesses. Characteristics of neoliberalism include the collapse of the formal sector and state owned and operated industry, increased privatization, an underpaid labor force, and decreased social services. Critics of neoliberalism claim its strategies contribute to Western hegemonic efforts to dominate, subordinate, and assimilate subaltern peoples of the world (NACLA, 1995).

embraced full-blown neoliberalism.<sup>8</sup> According to critics, this meant succumbing to World Bank and IMF pressures to sell remaining natural resources to private transnational corporations [TNCs], allowing TNCs to set prices, wages and production in exchange for foreign capital (Shultz, 00) These economic reform policies may have “halted inflation but not poverty” (Ceasar, 2001). Bolivia’s resistance movement mobilized and by the late 1990s engaged in routine, low level general strikes, hunger strikes and massive roadblocks and demonstrations, but had little influence. These activities intensified during this research period to a crisis proportion.

A recent study by Lykke Andersen (2002), an economist from Universidad Católica Boliviana, on economic solutions to poverty in Bolivia, proposes rural-urban migration as the cheapest way to reduce poverty.<sup>9</sup> Public services such as electricity, piped water, schools, and health services “can be provided more effectively and at a much lower cost per person” in the urban regions (Andersen, 2002, p. 14). The study suggests that land titles be returned to all informal landowners who could then sell the land and “facilitate a consolidation and modernization of agriculture in the highlands” (p. 15). The migration to urban areas is seen by the study as “quite desirable” for youth to pursue education, however, the migration of the entire family is “undesirable” because the older generation are “not well equipped for urban employment and the transition” (p. 14). Lowland migration to the cities reduces the expansion of agriculture and would

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<sup>8</sup> Banzer previously ruled as military dictator via a military coup in 1971 where he became known as the “Pinochet of Bolivia.” It was at this time that he planted the seeds for economic reform.

<sup>9</sup> The study was a joint project between the Kiel Institute of World Economics, the Institute for Socio-Economic Research and the *Institución Internacional de Economía y Empresa* on “Poverty Impacts of Macroeconomic Reform.”

permit “developing the image of a bio-diversity haven and an eco-tourism paradise” (p. 15).

It is surprising that this new research from one of Bolivia’s outstanding universities would still advocate low-income housing and urbanization as alleviation for rural poverty considering lessons learned from *El Alto*, an urban development experiment, or failure as some would call it. Oxfam International (OI) documents the challenges of this approach and is presently working on site to remedy many of the social ills resulting from dislocation and poor urban planning. Once a vast rural region 3800 meters above sea level, *El Alto* is located on the barren and desolate outer rim of La Paz where over 600,000 Aymara Indians migrated from the *campo* to what was to become an intentional urban community. Instead of a panacea for rural areas, *El Alto* suffers from smog, poor sanitation, increased drug abuse, dust, crime and lack of organization, in addition to the high altitude. Therefore, urbanization is consistent with Bolivia’s commitment to its new economic theology.

The strategies underlying the economic and political attempts to modernize the “underdeveloped” peoples of Bolivia are familiar Western models of development repackaged as hopeful solutions to Bolivia’s poverty. These strategies utilize hegemonic control to relocate subjects—everyday women and men—in terms of their cultural, racial, gendered, and spatial identities (Stephenson, 1999).<sup>10</sup> According to Cusicanqui (1993), “Hegemonic appeals to modernize attempt to legitimize political, social, and economic practices.”

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<sup>10</sup> Although this study is not based upon social theory, the study is informed by social theorists’ commentary on race construction in Latin America. Hegemony is a Marxist theoretical term Antonio Gramsci (1971) used to denote the predominance of one social class over others, and the dominance of that group’s projected worldview as “normal.”

### The Bank that Keeps on Giving

The history of Bolivia's journey to becoming one of the world's most indebted countries<sup>11</sup> began in the 1970s under the national-security state system of Hugo Banzer's first presidency, a brutal dictatorship (Dennis, 1997).<sup>12</sup> Debt dropped during a period of extreme period of inflation in the early 1990s, but as Bolivia sold off its national assets and experienced the consequences of the World Bank's structural adjustment policies (SAPs), its debt burden remained high. In efforts to gain control of Bolivia's economic disaster, the World Bank and IMF initiated the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative in September 1999. However, the HIPC effort was stifled due to lack of clear priorities and participation from varied constituencies (World Bank, 2001).

In March 2000 of this research period, prior to the "War on Water" demonstrations, a broad based representation from civil society groups—small producers, indigenous peoples, and miners—came together for a national dialogue on poverty reduction. The effort is known as PRSP or *La Estrategia Boliviana de Reducción de la Pobreza*. Following, the World Bank drafted the Enhanced HIPC Initiative, a proposal which forgave Bolivia of a sizable portion of its debt, and reformulated a four-pronged plan for sustainable growth, social development,

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<sup>11</sup> The World Bank classifies indebtedness into three categories, severely indebted, moderately indebted, and less indebted. Sever indebtedness is "the present value of debt service to GNI (80 percent) and present value of debt service to exports (220 percent) (World Bank, 2000).

<sup>12</sup> During these years, Bolivia's debt grew from \$700 million to \$4 billion ten years later (Dennis, 1997).

institutional strengthening, and eradication of drug (coca) production and trade<sup>13</sup> (IMF, 2002).

### On the Road Towards Sustainability?

Strategies for environmental conservation and sustainable use for biodiversity were initiated after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, 1992, the watershed year for international and national dialogue about sustainable development.<sup>14</sup> In the two years subsequent to this study's fieldwork, 2000-2002, a number of collaborative efforts between the U.S. State Department,<sup>15</sup> the World Bank and U.S. AID, human rights and

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<sup>13</sup> An American Baha'i living in Cochabamba during this research period was a director for one of the U.S.AID coca replantation projects in a region of Bolivia where the coca farmers organized to participate in the 2000 resistance against privatization. I was unable to locate him for an interview.

<sup>14</sup> The UN World Commission on Environmental and Development first introduced the notion 'sustainability' to the global arena in 1987 in the context of 'sustainable development'. The statement, "Our Common Future," more commonly known as Brundtland Report, issued an environmental report card to the world documenting the status and future of the global economic and ecological situation. Its warning linked acute poverty to environmental degradation, and announced that in order to sustain economic development, new approaches that did not deplete the earth's natural resources or harm the environment where needed. Numerous international actors set the benchmark definition for sustainable development. According to this document, the terms means: ... "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland Report, 1983). In addition to making clear the connections between environmental protection, economic growth and social equity, the report, and more importantly, the term, generated a heated debate within the scientific, civic and funding agency community. The concept of sustainable development asked the following two questions: "Is it possible to increase the basic standard of living of the world's expanding population without unnecessarily depleting our finite natural resources and further degrading the environment upon which we all depend?" It also asked "Can humanity collectively step back from the brink of environmental collapse and, at the same time, lift its poorest members up to the level of basic human health and dignity?" (Sitarz, 1994)

<sup>15</sup> Agenda 21, the World Summit (1992) action plan for helping humanity "to forge its way into the next century by proceeding more gently upon the Earth," addressed the problems of use and programs and activities for mitigating global commons problems (Sitarz, 1993). While the Brundtland Report is considered one the most important environmental treatise of the latter part of the twentieth century, and Agenda 21 is attributed for generating environmental community activity, particularly in Western European communities, critics, who challenge the one-sidedness of the approach, state: "It is not possible to meet 'the needs of the present' without recognising (sic) that first among them are the desperate needs of the world's poor. The poor lack adequate food, housing, health-care, sanitation, education, clothes and work. Disparities between rich and poor, most obvious in the South but entrenched in the North too, have, as it were, been institutionalised (sic) in the Northern commitment to 'market forces' and the economics of capital" (Middleton, et, al., 1993).

environmental NGOs, and local groups in Bolivia have initiated projects towards improving the environment's ability to serve the needs of the Bolivian people. These efforts include propositions for sustainable use of remaining natural resources, such as managing forests and land, safeguarding biodiversity, and harvesting solar power to increase electricity to rural areas (World Bank, 2002).

Even though many diverse interests groups have engaged in dialogue about the environment and the Bank forgave most of its global debt, the Bolivian road towards sustainability is divided into many paths and the solutions may not be all they appear. For example, the U.S. supported "sustainable development" initiatives are modeled after other "wars on drugs" waged elsewhere in Latin America. US.AID agricultural efforts to combat drug trafficking by providing coca farmers with technical skills to replant new crops for sustainable harvests not only displaced angry local coca farmers but also dipped deeply into the Bolivian local economy. These efforts towards "sustainability" from the outside, contradict local and indigenous aims.

The claims of other "sustainable development" initiatives whose say they are turning 'natural' resources into 'environmental capital' (Middleton, et. al, 1993, p. 19) raise questions about the ownership of resources and benefits to the market economy. For instance, UNEP and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) are presenting collaboration to protect the rich biodiversity in the Chaco Region through the support of ecotourism (GEF, 2000). An initiative between the World Bank, American Electric Power, and SolarQuest installed photovoltaic panels to increase electricity and internet availability to remote villages in regions outside those of this case study (Ayers, 2000). Other projects between U.S. and the Bolivian government increase the rate of forest

clearcutting to manage land for crop production. Collaborative projects with Northern governments and their corporations such as these have yet to resolve the discrepancies in social justice, sincere environmental concern, and market interests.

The other path towards sustainability in Bolivia is driven by internal initiatives from indigenously led resistance social movements, inspired in part by the successful organizing efforts in Ecuador and Peru and by local organizing against privatization. One of the outcomes of the "War for Water" episode, during the research period of this study, was the emergence of Felipe Quispe, an Aymara leader known as "the Mallku," or "condor." Small groups of mostly Aymara, but including a number of Quechua as well, have sought self-determination by designing cooperative and sustainable agricultural projects throughout the country. These separate, but interconnected movements, evoke the spirit of Bolivian Indian resistance, and follow the footsteps of other indigenous groups who have mobilized through cyberspace, such as the Zapatistas in Mexico; they have increased their visibility within the past few years through the Internet. Rather than efforts that serve the interest of the North, such initiatives are seen to promote history, preserve language, and affirm indigenous identity.

#### The Cultural Landscape—Where Race, Class, Ethnicity, and Gender Collide

Bolivia is the most Indian nation in Latin America. In 1995, the national population leveled at 6.4 million. Of those *bolivianos*, one-third are Quechua and one-fourth are Aymara. Some thirty other indigenous groups live throughout the eastern



lowlands, totaling 70-80% of the Bolivian population (Kallisaya, 2001).<sup>16</sup> The indigenous people in Bolivia are, as elsewhere in South America, in the lowest socio-economic and political strata.

Words used to describe Bolivia's many social identities are "*criollo*," "*mestizo*," "*cholo*," and "Indian." *Criollos* are the elite, often referred to by the indigenous groups as *los blancos* [the white Spanish]. This group is considered "*gente decente or refinado*" ["decent" or "refined" people] (Burke, 1995). The ambiguous term "*mestizo/a*" is a category used throughout all South America to describe the majority of the population who are a Spanish and Indian mix. *Cholo* and *cholita* are terms specific to Bolivia that, from colonial times, meant to denote individuals with one white (Spanish) grandparent; today the term pejoratively describes the urban *mestizo*. Burke (1995) said, "*Cholo* is a term that connotes a person who is neither Indian nor *gente decente*," but refers to a "group of people (who) are upwardly mobile in society, yet are still discriminated against by the dominant members."

The largest group in Bolivia belongs to the indigenous societies. The terms and connotations used to describe this group have also changed to reflect Bolivia's political agenda and serve its economic interests. During the colonial period, Andean people were called Indians or *indios*, a commodified term used to fiscally represent their economic obligations to the *encomienda patrons* (comparable to plantation owners) (Stephanson, 1995). Later, as the need to distinguish *mestizos* from Indians increased to reflect social and economic changes of the different regions under colonial rule, the two groups were divided by ethnic differences, and later, with the support of scientific

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<sup>16</sup> Refers to The White House Millennium Council, an initiative established in 2000 by the Clinton administration.

definitions, by the construction of race categories (NACLA, 2001). By the end of the nineteenth century, the designation *indio* became a pejorative term and connoted laziness, ignorance, and untrustworthiness.<sup>17</sup> After the 1952 revolution when the indigenous were freed from serfdom, Indians became *campesinos*, a Marxist classless term for peasants. “*Campesino*” was intended to forge “broad inter-and intra class alliances and oppositions (Lagos, 1994), however the idea of “backwardness” and “Indianness” continued to pervade the dominant images and associations of those from *el campo* (the countryside).

Indigenous people in Bolivia identify themselves according to language; one refers to oneself and others as Quechua or Aymara speaker(s) and according to where one lives—*el campo* (the countryside) or *la ciudad* (the city). Within the past 50 years, many of these speakers have adopted Spanish as their second language, although the nation made it the national language since colonial times. Despite the blurred boundaries that mark groups, as more indigenous adopt Spanish, language remains an identity marker.<sup>18</sup> And, even though these linguistic distinctions define class and ethnic identity, Spanish speech patterns convey social status. For example,

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<sup>17</sup> Figures on the percentage of indigenous people in Bolivia are inconsistent, with differences ranging from 65% to 80%. Writing for the Bolivian Times, Aymara author Illapa Kallisaya said, “Discrepancies are attributed to a number of factors, one of which is that figures by indigenous include descent and ignore “*mestizaje*,” the social and cultural transformation of identity from an indigenous person to a mestizo. Also, at present, many Quechua and Aymara from the highlands are relocating to the lowlands for economic subsistence, and urban migration continues at high rates due to the collapse of the formal sector and privatization of national resources.”

<sup>18</sup> I provide a personal example to illustrate the insidious ways institutional systemic exclusion is pervasive and how my Colombian mother produced racism in my own family. My mother frequently threatened to “return me to the Indians,” when I was acted *perisosa* (lazy). In this case, the Indians she referred to were the Montilones, a Colombian tribe along the Amazon known for their “cannibal” and “headhunting” behaviors. She called me a “tomboy” because I spent most of my childhood playing in the woods and getting dirty, where upon she would wipe my hands, saying, “*ay, susio como los indios*” (dirty like the Indians). Not only did she carry Latin racism and classism, she also manifested the internalized racism of

The *gente decente* (decent people or non-Indian) is always referred to in the formal "you," or *usted*, by those who are unfamiliar with the person. However, non-Indians do not refer to unknown Indians by "formal you, or *usted*," but rather by the "informal you, or *tu*" (Pamela Burke, 1995, "Highland Indigenous People of Bolivia," p.8).

Bolivia is a nation struggling to construct a unified and unifying nationalism, and its obstacles are rooted in "deep cultural, economic, and political divisions, expressed in individuals' strong identification with their own department and frequent rivalry towards other" (Luykx, 1999, p. 19). The ethnic concepts underlying the creation and use of *indio*, *cholo*, and *criollo* provide language for social exclusion and served to separate rural and urban indigenous dwellers.<sup>19</sup> These ethnic divisions served as strategic and necessary criteria towards building a unified state, but paradoxically keep Bolivia's turbulent colonial history alive today.<sup>20</sup> Cultural manifestations of these divisions and rivalry can be noted in social jokes related to place of origin, identification according to region or language, and by the lack of unifying cultural symbols (Luykx, 1999). Discrimination between *los indígenas y los*

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our own indigeness through the repeated reminders "*la linea es pura*" (the lineage is pure) and "*somos de españa*" (we are from Spain). The women of the family proved their links to Spain on their brown fingers through the gold coat of arms ring that was stamped with the Queen's banner.

<sup>19</sup> The government's 1992 educational reform, the Popular Participation Plan, emphasized the maintenance of local language and cultures by incorporating cultural knowledge into the curriculum. However, I observed in rural schools in Bolivia that all educational materials available through the state were written in Spanish and that most of the teachers I met are Spanish and not Quechua speakers. They say public school teachers in the campo are not hired because they speak the native language, but because they have at least an eighth grade education and are willing to work in remote regions for no more than \$50.00 U.S. dollars a day (Rittenhouse, 2000, personal communication).

<sup>20</sup> Anthropologist Aurolyn Luykx (1999) writes, "Bolivia's most fundamental ethnic division is the tripartite one between *indios/campesinos*, *mestizos*, and *blancos/criollos*. These categories are more permeable than one might expect: individuals may be assigned to one or the other as much on the basis of speech, dress, and other elements of personal style as by actual descent or phenotype. Although "ethnicity" is often quite fluid and situational (Eriksen 1993:20), the perception of ethnic categories as clear-cut and easily definable is important in an ideological sense (Tambiah 1989:335). In popular discourse, ethnic labels tend to be reified as static categories usually in opposition to the speaker's identity (Luykx, p. 20).

*demas* (the indigenous and the others) is found on busy city streets: indigenous people are expected to ride in the backs of buses or stand on opposite sides of the street as the non-indigenous people (Burke, 1995). To conclude, race, ethnicity and class divisions in Bolivia are both static and ambiguous and challenge the formation of modern national unity.<sup>21</sup>

### Bolivian Women's Experiences

As elsewhere in Latin America, if not most of the world, historically women in Bolivia have been excluded from power in the public domain (Jelin, 1990). Women in public spheres are viewed as a threat to the private; the prevailing ideology of womanhood is framed by her motherhood, both in the urban areas, where the wealthy, middle class and indigenous poor reside and in the rural areas where only the poorer *mestizo/a* and indigenous live (Stephenson, 1999). In the home, the urban and rural *criolla*, *mestiza*, and Indian woman are viewed as the motor of the family.

Within the past ten years, urban *criolla* women broke into the public domain, yet are still on the margins. These educated women occupied office positions in

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<sup>21</sup> In her case study of land ownership amongst the Quechua in a rural region within the Cochabamba department, Maria Lagos (1994) looks at the relationship of autonomy—as ideology and as agency—and power. Lagos observes the inherent ambiguities in local cultural representations of self and others as “vecinos and villagers” do not distinguish social differences and categories on the basis of perceived images of class, but on “imagined representations of ethnicity that are encoded within a hegemonic discourse” (p. 152). In one situation, Lagos notes a “wealthy” light-skinned, green-eyed indigenous man from Sank’ayani (the lowlands) who is a landowner, a money lender and sharecropper, and who speaks little Spanish is viewed as an “Indian” in the eyes of his neighbors, but a dark complexioned poor, landless friend refers to himself as *mestizo*. In addition, she notes Quechua (men) who find Spanish ancestry in their background refer to themselves as *blanco*. The prevalent statement, “*los campesinos son buena gente hasta que se les sale el indio*” (“Peasants are nice people until they reveal their Indianness”) has not changed the racialized, essential nature of Indianness whereas, she states the urban setting of the city or town is primarily associated with whiteness.

nationalized businesses and industry before the collapse of the public sector. As Bolivia privatized, these working women became the visible and “legitimate” professionals. However, their entry into the white-collar work force is limited and social approval in Bolivia is conditional. The Bolivian “glass ceiling” contains women’s ability to attain many mid-level positions. These women are still placed in dichotomous positions where they are forced to choose between motherhood (the house) or their politics (the workplace) (Stephenson, 1999).

Even *criolla* women remain invisible in politics despite quota laws for women’s greater participation (Arrington, 2000a). Women attribute “machista men” to the lack of numbers, and men blame women’s lack of interest. A public figure, Guzmán de Rojas, is quoted by Arrington (2000a) in her article *Women Still on the Political Margins* as saying, “There are still men who think women are not capable of being politicians. There are plenty of women out there, I don’t think you have to invent their names. It’s just a question of opening your eyes, nothing else” (p. 3). Still, there is general agreement that the lack of women in politics defeats the nation’s mission: to build a “real democracy” and current rhetoric suggests there is no other choice than to create inclusive policies.

Feminist values, albeit liberal, are shared by the elite and the Westernized young professionals turned out in increasing numbers by universities. The feminist agenda, enlarged due to the pre- and post- Beijing women’s conference activities, continues to produce rhetoric for the right of women to work, to earn an equitable wage, to engage in political discourse and participate in decision-making processes. During this research period, specific gender issues, such as domestic violence

protection and reproductive rights care emerged for national debate. But the women who carry this agenda forward into the community are dismissed by the majority as “anti-feminine.” The opinion suggests these women have adopted masculine codes of behavior and women are blamed for an increasing divorce rate (Ortega, 2000, personal communication). Although the liberal feminist debates are credited for an emerging *nueva mujer* (new woman), Bolivia’s feminism ignores the articulations of race and ethnicity vis-à-vis its exclusion of indigenous women’s concerns.

### The “Women Question” and the Gender Context for Indigenous Women

Throughout Andean Bolivia, racial and cultural differences are visibly marked mostly on the women. The women wear the traditional *pollera*, the pleated colorful skirt, hair in long, thick braids, and they speak Quechua, Aymara, or a lowlands dialect. The men, by contrast, mostly all wear Western clothing and cut their hair short.

The “women question” and the gender context for the indigenous women in the *campo* and urban areas portray a landscape as dramatically different as Bolivia’s terrain. Specifically, the indigenous woman occupies a non-woman status among the *criolla*, wealthy class (Stephenson, 1999).<sup>22</sup> The achievements gained by the middle class and the wealthy in their struggles for equality are not shared with the indigenous woman, neither are her practical struggles for access to clean water, worker’s rights,

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<sup>22</sup> Marcia Stephenson opens her chapter, *Ideologies of Womanhood and the Politics of Resistance in La Paz, 1900-1952*, with a description of 1990 comic from the journal *Mujer/Fempres*. A cartoon drawing depicts a woman conversing with a man who says with fist raised, “Women have the right to demand equality and justice.” The eavesdropping Aymara maid, pictured from behind the door, jumps out and declares “Bravo!” The first woman turns to scold the maid, saying: “I said women, I did not say domestic employees” (p. 9).

education, health care, or family planning adopted on the same agenda. Not unlike how race interpellates women's movements elsewhere in the world, alliances between *criolla*, *mestiza*, *chola* and indigenous women in Bolivia have been virtually impossible.

### Indigenous Life in the *Campo* for Women

In the Quechua rural areas where this research was conducted, women are responsible for all domestic activities, which includes watching the sheep, planting and harvesting crops in the fields, preparing all food, hand washing all clothes, cleaning the home, weaving blankets in spare time, and bearing and raising children. If there is access to health care, such as the resources for dental work, the men receive care. Tooth extraction is the general practice for women. Even when health-based NGOs serve rural communities, women do not always feel safe talking about reproductive options (Limachi, 2000, personal communication). Even though women work the land, according to both state and traditional custom, women do not have access to land tenure. Despite the "*Plan de Todos*," educational reform laws for "popular participation," girls are only required to attain a third grade education, and teachers are provided a \$50.00 per month stipend for communities with more than 20 students. In most remote, rural areas, standards for teacher employment are minimal, and knowledge of the local language or dialect is not a requirement. Books, when available, are in Spanish. When women do go to school, they study after completing daily chores, and because electricity is not available in most places, they studies under a "gas torch...if the family or community even have one" (Pachacopa, 2000, personal

communication). Preference for education is given to males; the composition of the classroom is dominantly boys. According to government statistics, in 1999 almost 52 percent of Bolivia's two million elementary and high school students were boys. But the gender difference in certain categories was much greater: nationwide, almost 61 percent of rural high school students were boys.

In the primary grades, two obstacles work against girls' success. First, the Quechua culture produces and reproduces "shy and timid" females (Ortega, 2000, personal communication). Common to the Chuquisaca region, when women do speak, hands are placed to cover their mouths when they talk, or laugh. Also, because women's voice is invisible and not valued, young girls lack positive role models and men (and boys) dismiss with humor girls' contributions. Since "boys are put in school and high school and the girls are left out," they end up "not knowing anything" (Pachacopa, 2000, personal communication). Also, because most of rural life is consumed by daily survival, parents often hold the perception that because young girls were sent to school once, they continue to receive an education.

To highlight this point, I provide an example from lessons learned of a focus group of the original 1989 TMCA project. One community agreed that they were sending their boys and girls to school on an equal basis and a registration list confirmed their statements. What's more, these families sent all their children to school, that is, they were not gender selective; those who did not send children did not send girls or boys. Parents answered the question, "Do you send your daughter to school" as affirmative. However, upon further investigation, it was learned that although parents perceived that their daughters were in school, because either they intended for them to



attend or because they actually were enrolled, the answer to the question, “Is your daughter in school *today*?” revealed very different information. In most cases, the daughters were washing clothes, tending sheep, caring for younger siblings, or cutting vegetables. Once the community further engaged in the focus group experience, parents admitted that perhaps because she was needed at home for a short time, maybe for a harvest or after the birth of a new baby, and that since she would get so behind in her studies, she no longer wanted to return. Other reasons for girls not attending included the mother’s own lack of literacy and her perceived fear of the girl’s learning: “Well, one of the reasons I’m a little reticent to send my daughter to school, even though I will do it, is because I really don’t know what she’s learning there” (Shoai, personal communication, 2000).

Lack of appropriate infrastructure discourages attendance. One community member said: “Our little girls, our daughters, aren’t in school because the road to school is dangerous. Its about two to three hours walk away, and when the river gets high, the little girls have a hard time getting across” (Shoai, 2000, personal communication). The threat of sexual assault impacts not only women, but also the education of the girl child. One focus group community noted a reduction in girls’ attendance after “a case of sexual abuse of one little girl and everyone was very fearful of sending their little girls to school” (Shoai, 2000, personal communication). Among the mothers of school-aged girls, three out of five women here have been victims of domestic violence (Arrington, 2000). Some believe the only way to control their daughters’ sexuality is to not send them to school (Westland, 2001).

Even within the *Sindicato*, the labor unions, where women were the strongest union resisters to the inhumane working conditions during Bolivia's nationalized period, women's voice is not taken seriously. Although *campesina* women like Domita de Chungara and Bartolia Sisa participated in indigenous struggles and influenced popular social movements, the literature on social movements ignore them (León, 1990). The women I interviewed for this study talked about men asking for women's input in union meetings, but noted that when it is offered, she is generally mocked and ridiculed (Andrea, 2000, personal communication).

#### Indigenous Life in Urban Centers for Women

Conditions for *campesina* women living in urban areas differ only in geography. The popularity of women working as domestic servants throughout Latin America has been quite high since the 1960s, however, the street vending that started as a novelty, dramatically increased in the aftermath of the collapse of the nationalized, public sector. In an early 1990s NACLA interview, one woman said, "My friends are almost all domestic workers from the countryside. We dream of saving enough money to be able to set up our own stalls" (Farthing, 1991). The idea of that dream was more enticing than the reality. In addition to their 11 hours of selling goods in the street, women work on an average five more hours doing domestic chores. The rural young girls and women who work as domestic service laborers leave their rural villages for urban settings to work about 75 hours a week (NACLA, 1991).

One interview subject for this study told me:

If you work on the street, it's good, but it depends. In the market there are good days and not good days. When some people sell in the market and have been selling for years and build up a clientele do well, but it depends. I work as a

domestic worker now, but if I sold in the market, I could still get my education (Andrea, 2000, personal communication).

Whether indigenous women earn income as domestic workers or as street vendors, women's work is still an extension of the products she makes or cooks in the home.

### Summary

Historical and class variations influence positions within society (class, gender, ethnicity), and social mechanisms (school, media, the market) socialize individuals to create knowledge about themselves and others (Cusicanqui, 1990, Lagos, 1994, Stephenson, 1999, Luykx, 1999). Race influences Bolivian women's experiences, and influences the formation of their womanhood in the public and private spheres. Despite Bolivia's attempt to forge a unified nationhood, ethnic divisions continue to stratify its people by class and race; the ethnic wedge divides *criolla*, mestiza and indigenous women. Although the indigenous people comprise the largest groups in Bolivia, they have the least access to resources.

## The Religious Context

### The Baha'i Perspective of Race, Class and Ethnic Divisions

The growth in membership within the Baha'i community, particularly among the indigenous, is the greatest in Bolivia.<sup>23</sup> The Bolivians (Quechua indigenous, urban mestizo/as, and "white" *criollos*) who add to their identity the category of the Baha'i Faith reconceptualize race/class/gender categories. Unlike the political agenda to oppress, colonize, or subtract from the Indian, or the mission of some religious groups who imposed reductionist or colonialist assumptions, the Baha'i teachings intentionally advocate for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against indigenous peoples.<sup>24</sup> In addition, the aboriginal, indigenous people throughout the world are considered the potential leaders.

Since the fundamental organizing principle of this religion centers on the spiritual and practical vision of the "oneness of humanity," which is inextricably linked to the achievement of a future peaceful world civilization, the Baha'i worldview rejects modernist assumptions, such as idea of the artificial boundaries and barriers that separate races and people.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> According to statistics compiled by David Barrett in the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 2000, 3.25 % of Bolivia's population are Baha'i, which ranks Bolivia as having the 6<sup>th</sup> highest Baha'i population in the world relative to its total population. Bolivia ranks as the 7<sup>th</sup> highest percentage of Baha'is in the world. The greater majority of these followers are from the indigenous communities (Shoai, 2000, personal communication).

<sup>24</sup> The BIC is a participant in the drafting of the evolving global standards concerning the rights of indigenous populations. The Baha'i International Indigenous Council, a grassroots organization with members throughout the aboriginal world, teaches about the unique and destined role the indigenous play in the unification of the human race.

<sup>25</sup> 'Abdu'l-Baha explains, "The earth has one surface. God has not divided this surface by boundaries and barriers to separate races and peoples. Man has set up and established these imaginary lines, giving to each restricted area a name and a limitation of a native land or nationhood." The Writings also state: "...the well

The members of the Bolivian Baha'i community look like other Bolivians—there are no outstanding external features to distinguish them as Baha'is, except for an occasional necklace or pin in the shape of a nine-pointed star, or the ring-stone symbol.<sup>26</sup> However, what did distinguish them as Baha'is were that Aymara, Quechua, *mestizo/a*, *criollo/a*, white and black North Americans and Europeans peeled the potatoes, ate, talked, laughed, played and prayed together inside and outside the Baha'i community. Also, the Baha'is expanded the limits of their identity to “world citizens.” Indians would introduced themselves as “Baha'is” first, and “Quechua from the city,” or “Quechua from the *campo*,” second. Another distinction among the Baha'i indigenous communities was that the Aymara and Quechua associated with one another in public, at social gatherings and often intermarried. This behavior is unusual in Bolivia because of the historic and economic discrimination between both groups.<sup>27</sup>

The Quechua women and men I interviewed for this study described what it meant to be a Baha'i as “living with unity in diversity,” “treating children kindly and lovingly,” “men help(ing) women,” “no alcoholism, no family violence,” knowing “we were created to serve a power greater than ourselves...to serve humanity,” and “spiritual education of children.”

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being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established (Baha'u'llah, Gleanings).”

<sup>26</sup> The nine-pointed star, like the Houses of Worship on each continent, have nine sides to represent each of the world's major religions. Women or men wear the nine-pointed star symbol. Other “talisman” symbols include the ring-stone symbol or the “Greatest Name,” which is similar to the Islamic faith, of a greeting in Arabic letters, in this case, “God is the Most-Glorious of the Glorious.” However, I only noticed the Quechua Indians living in urban areas to wear these markings.

<sup>27</sup> The subjugation of the Aymara by the Quechuan Incan ancestors is linked to economic differences. The Aymara of the highlands are positioned in a slightly higher socio-economic level with greater access to resources and are more outspoken as compared to the “timid” and “shy” Quechua of the lower highlands (Ortega, 2000).

The reconstruction of identity in the Bolivian Baha'i community is not free of conflict, contradiction or ambiguity. On the contrary, Baha'is walk in two (or more) worlds, meaning that societal attitudes and behaviors are engrained in each woman and man and constitute the spaces for "spiritual growth."

#### The Baha'i Vision of Gender Equality

As early as one century ago, the leaders of this religious community revealed the principle of the equality of the women and men and outlined its dynamic relationship with the achievement of world peace:

The world of humanity is possessed of two wings — the male and the female. So long as these two wings are not equivalent in strength the bird will not fly. Until womankind reaches the same degree as man, until she enjoys the same arena of activity, extraordinary attainment for humanity will not be realized; humanity cannot wing its way to heights of real attainment (Baha'u'llah).

The advancement of women is also directly linked with the progress of man:

Women have equal rights upon the earth; in religion and society women are a very important element. As long as women are prevented from attaining their highest possibilities, so long will men be unable to achieve the greatness which might be theirs... ('Abdul-Baha, 1911, "Paris Talks," p. 133).

Bolivia's past left its legacy on gender relations among the indigenous and the gender context for the Quechua Baha'is are similar to those struggles against patriarchy elsewhere in the world. One Quechua man interviewed for this study said:

[There was] the culture of the colonizers. We lived in a system of enslavement where the landowners treated our ancestors with a bad attitude. They taught us to order our women and if they didn't because they loved their wives, the landowners would hit the women. If they were not treated poorly the landowners would treat the women badly. But, that was the system. In the Baha'i system, that doesn't exist (Epifanio, 2000, personal communication).

But, replacing one cultural system and its new set of standards, values and practices following another, more rigid and entrenched is complex, far more than a relatively more simple system, such as at the individual level, because more information—feedback loops—operate to keep the original system in a state of stability. About twenty years ago, the early tensions and conflicts experienced by the indigenous community as they moved towards developing a Baha'i vision of equality were presented as women's concerns:

What we found happen is that the men that was travel around, the families were starting to have marital problems because the women assumed they must have another family somewhere else and that was why they were traveling. Some of our best traveling teachers were having marital problems because of this suspicion and jealous (E. Anelo, 2000, personal communication).

The men would say, ““Oh, I'm teaching the Faith,” and the women would respond, “Oh, sure you are.” However, this realization was not understood by the other Bolivian Baha'is as a women's problem, instead the concern alerted others to pay better attention to planning for the needs of women. To do so required a shift in the participation of men in home life:

I remember one of the first *cursillos* we had with women in Chuquisaca. They came, a group of about 20 came, and then we realized that all they had to do to be able to come was, the men had to accept staying home with the children and cook for themselves and take care of the domestic responsibilities while they went off for a week for a *cursillo*. It was a very beautiful thing (E. Anelo, 2000, personal communication).

In the *cursillo*, the women learned about the skill and use of consultation, which contradicted their entrenched cultural pattern of male domination:

[we taught] how everyone had to express their views and we had to have agreement before decisions were made and to them it was like something

that they had never experienced. ...that they had an equal voice in consultation. They'd say that if we disagree, they'd hit us and say shut up. They all laughed and agree, 'that's true, that's the way it is' (E. Anelo, 2000, personal communication).

The experience revealed to the other Baha'is from the urban areas that the deepening work they had done with the men about equality in the family and consultation was not having the expected results:

So, we really started encouraging more and more that the women come and bring the children and participating in the events. And, that everyone cooked, peeled the potatoes and cleaned when the time came so that the women could participate. So, we started creating a different kind of institute culture, *cursillo* culture, in Bolivia. We started seeing that the women were becoming more and more active in the Baha'i community and participating in events in Chuquisaca. I would say these last few years some of our greatest Baha'i teachers are young women from Chuquisaca region (E. Anelo, 2000, personal communication).

Twenty years later, the gender context for the Quechua Baha'is in the struggle to operationalize the principles of equality in their everyday life continues. For example, on the one hand, young women have become literacy and health promoters," "achieve much higher degree of education than is common for girls," "travel as teachers," "don't go to the bars in the campo," "are more transformed," "don't hit their children," are "more respectful to children and to themselves," and "walk with the men." And, the men in some communities are devoted to establishing centers of learning for literacy, education, and "well-being," but on the other hand, change is slow. One woman acknowledged that even though they've deepened to understand these principles of equality, "we don't practice (the teachings) and we haven't seen the change" (Felipé, 2000, personal communication).



### Chapter Summary

Bolivia is the poorest, the most isolated, and until recently, the most organized indigenous nation in South America. Neoliberal policies of privatization, have become Bolivia's new economic theology. The collapse of formal sector threw the indigenous people, primarily, and mostly women, into the streets to earn a wage without union benefits. Political and economic unrest and instability threatens hegemonic attempts to forge a nationhood out of Bolivia's many diverse ethnic groups. The rise in feminism includes the white, educated middle classes but ignores indigenous women's interests and needs. Race interpellates women's movement and alliances between *criolla*, *mestiza*, *chola* and indigenous women are non-existent. Only geography separates indigenous women's work in the rural and urban areas; cultural attitudes and behavior towards women's role render the girl child consumed with family responsibilities at the expense of her education.

Within this context, the indigenous members of the Baha'i community in Bolivia struggles to redefine identity and gender roles, and sustain community. These Quechua are learning to replace old, entrenched cultural attitudes and behaviors towards women's role and gender with new thinking. They are learning about the importance of women and men as equals, so "the bird will fly," and "extraordinary attainment for humanity" will be realized (Baha'u'llah, undated). They are learning that mistreatment of women prohibits their own "greatness" and without women's contribution the whole community suffers.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS

*“What are you doing, what is your intention for being here?”  
(Sadai from Puka Puka)*

*“If I’m going to collaborate with people and I’m really going to live up to that commitment, I can’t just write a report all by myself. If we generate a report together, we decide together how it’s going to be used” (Lincoln, 1997, p.9)*

*“...from the moment the Indians ask you what you will do with all those questions and answers, they are making you accountable for your presence amongst them...” (Ramons, 1994, p. 86)*

#### Design of the Study

##### Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the methods used to conduct an implementation evaluation of the 1989 international Gender and Development (GAD) intervention with women and men participants from rural Quechua communities in Andean Bolivia. The purpose of the evaluation was to learn about the successes and failures of the 1989 UNIFEM/BIC development project entitled, “Traditional Media as Change Agent” (TMCA) and to engage the participants in a process that would stimulate personal and social transformative change. The research design was a Participatory Action Research (PAR) design utilizing qualitative inquiry, feminist approaches, ethnographic methods,

the Latin American literary genre of *testimonio* (testimonial) accounts. It emphasized a systems approach to viewing complex social problems. Although there are similarities in the selection of methods in this study and the original 1989 TMCA methodology, the two should not be confused.

### Methodological Framework

For this study, I selected a qualitative approach to PAR to match the methods of the original 1989 TMCA project and I applied the perspectives and principles of feminist research to traditional PAR. I used an ethnographic-oriented methodology to conduct FPR in Baha'i settings where collaboration and consultation are common, acceptable methods for communication. This section examines the basic context for ethnographic-oriented research, Participatory Action Research (PAR), Feminist Approaches to PAR (FPR) and "doing research" in the Baha'i community. I begin this section with a brief history of the origins and definitions of PAR to clarify the difference between the original 1989 TMCA project use of one method of PAR, village participatory research methods, and the activist stance of PAR, which I applied to this study. I briefly define a paradigm and paradigm shifts and then I explain the conceptual frameworks of PAR as an alternative paradigm research method. I introduce the feminist critique of PAR and explore feminist approaches to PAR (FPR). I summarize this section with my PAR experience to provide a richer, subjective context for the case study and to qualify me as a PAR researcher who applied feminist approaches.

### Participatory Action Research (PAR) Methods

Definitions and History. PAR is a particular type of action research that falls under the broader family of action research models that emerged in the early 1900s. What distinguishes PAR from other Participatory Learning Action (PLA) models used in education or popular agricultural Participatory Rural Learning (PRL) models is its emphasis on activism against political oppression. As a method of social investigation to problems, PAR is considered “alternative research.” Its paradigmatic emphasis is on human subjectivity and consciousness in knowledge creation, the researcher’s closeness to the subject, the situated context or uniqueness of the situation, an interpretive, or naturalistic qualitative inquiry, capacities for local self-determination, and solidarity and action (Maguire, 1987, p. 23).

Early participatory research can be traced to adult education mobilization at the University of Dar es Salaam in the early 1970s, the Society for Participatory Research in Asia (SPR in Asia 1982), India, Bangladesh, and eventually to the Highlander Center in rural Appalachia in the United States (Chambers, 1992). Although rural participatory methods were used in the early 1900s, the origins of “activist participatory methods” begins with the practice and experience of Third World scholars (Freire, 1968, 1970; Fals Borda, 1985, 1988; Rahman, 1993).

PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) or PLA (Participatory Learning Action) are a broad participatory assessment approaches used widely by agricultural non-governmental development agencies in rural villages in late 1980s and 1990s (Appendix D). Village participatory methods, such as those used in the original 1989 TMCA project belong to the PLA family (Appendix E).

Participatory Action Research Conceptual Frameworks. Participatory approaches bifurcated into the broader category of participatory research and the specific methods of Participatory Action Research (PAR). Participatory research is an approach used more widely in industry and agriculture as an alternative applied research method (Whyte, 1991). What distinguishes PAR from PRA or PLA is its purposeful social action approach (Rahman, 1993) to research and political nature (Maguire, 1987). A PAR approach views development as an endogenous process where knowledge is created from within each woman and man's lived experience. As a method of social investigation, PAR assumes ordinary, community people are the best experts on their own lives and can generate collaborative learning, research and action (Maguire, 1989). Knowledge production provides agency to the people themselves and creates a more accurate and creative reflection of the social reality within which they live.

PAR gives research a "democratization thrust" (Liebenberg, 1997). Fals Borda (1995) identifies PAR as an alternative research method that

look(s) for different kinds of explanations, not only to gain a more clear understanding of the conflictual social processes that affected (the lives of those in the South) but also to assist in re-channeling collective energies toward a better course of action for justice and equity (p. 3).

PAR is generally accepted as a qualitative methodology, however PAR can use quantitative methodologies or mixed methods. There is no one acknowledged set of methodological strategies for PAR, nor is there any one set of techniques. Rather, PAR incorporates a vast range of research tools. Accordingly, the selection of tools or techniques is less important than the researcher's capacity to shift the locus of control to ordinary people (Fals Borda, 1995).

Because PAR is considered an alternative research method, PAR discourse contributes to “an on-going debate within the social sciences, challenging the dominant science paradigm” (Maguire, 1989).<sup>1</sup>

PAR Lenses, Paradigms and Shifts . A paradigm is an accumulated set of beliefs and assumptions about how the world operates and a collection of agreements of how problems are to be understood and solved within a particular historical and cultural context (Kuhn, 1962, Patton, 1975, Popkewitz, 1984).<sup>2</sup> Paradigms shift when one paradigm “can no longer ignore that which it fractures,” and over time, “one conceptual world view is replaced by another” (Kuhn, 1962). The ideas and values of the current, dominant Western paradigm of past several hundred years support:

a mechanical system composed of elementary building blocks, the view of the human body as a machine, the view of life in society as a competitive struggle for existence, the belief in unlimited material progress to be achieved through economic and technological growth... (Capra, 1996, p. 6).

Mainstream social science research is built upon the values this paradigm serves: competition, expansion and domination. Its methodologies provide a standardized framework that limits data collection to fit into predetermined analysis categories (Patton, 1980, p. 22). A shift to a new paradigm, one with a more holistic, integrated and inclusive worldview would call for a research paradigm based on a different set of assumptions and values. Capra (1995) suggests that an alternative research paradigm, one in which the social organization of people shifted from a hierarchical structure to a networking with

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<sup>1</sup> Maguire acknowledges Hall, 1979; Tandon, 1981; Horton, 1981, Vio Grossi, Martinic, Tapia, and Pascal, 1983.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Kuhn (1962) analyzed the relationship between paradigms and scientific inquiry in his research of the history of scientific progress and determined that paradigms are essential to scientific inquiry.

others, would include integrative values such as synthesis, cooperation, cooperation, intuition (p. 10). However, Maguire (1987) asserts that these two, bipolar categories paradoxically represents a dichotomized worldview while at the same time call for an integrated view of society. Even so, she also bipolarizes the two different worldviews as a way in which educators and researchers can view possibilities of the approaches which the research labels “traditional,” “orthodox,” and “mainstream” cannot do; however, Maguire warns against oversimplifying dichotomies (p. 11).

Omissions in PAR. Despite the fact that PAR literature outlines how it challenges the dominant research paradigm, and is presented within the on-going social science debate as alternative research paradigms (Freire, 1970; Hall, 1979; Tandon, 1981; Hall, 1981), PAR omits gender and feminist frameworks (Maguire, 1989). Maguire (1987, 1993) was the first to raise pointed questions about the PAR literature and practice.<sup>3</sup> She problematized gender in PAR’s theoretical frameworks and challenged its sexist bias, or “androcentric filter” in a number of ways (p. 5, 1987).<sup>4</sup> First, she noted that although PAR’s “founding fathers” aimed to give voice to the silenced and oppressed, the voices of those most unheard, the women, were omitted, and the oppression of women remained invisible. Secondly, the language of PAR assumed male dominance in its omission of women’s experiences. PAR literature lacked a gender analysis, a frame by which women were seen as separate from men. Without gender specification women and men were homogenized under the categories of “the people”, “the campesinos”, “the community”,

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<sup>3</sup> Patricia Maguire’s 1989 doctoral research utilizing participatory action research methods with community participants of the Former Battered Women’s Support Group Project in rural Gallup, New Mexico is considered seminal work in feminist approaches to PAR.

<sup>4</sup> Maguire (1989) said, “the peripheral nature of women and gender within participatory research is a reflection on the peripheral nature of gender in alternative paradigm social science research in general” (p. 49).

or even “the oppressed” (p. 48). Women’s participation was assumed, whereas when a gender analysis was applied, i.e., how many women or girls participated in decision-making, improved education or received health benefits, a different story was revealed.

Thirdly, Maguire raised questions as to why PAR literature ignored the extensive contributions from feminism to the positivist informed research, a discursive practice that has not significantly improved today (Maguire, 2001, personal communication). Also, PAR literature lacked discussion about how gender informed research. In a recent communication, Maguire said:

In Reason and Rowberry's new Handbook on Action research, both Stephen Kemmis and Orlando Fals Borda have chapters which explore their personal and professional development as action researchers- yet neither explores in that chapter how his experience of his gender influenced in any way his development and/or practice of action research. Men have gender too. What do their varied experiences of being a man in their particular contexts mean, if anything, for how they practice PAR....? (Maguire, personal communication, 2001).<sup>5</sup>

This male dominated view in traditional participatory research and its lack of concern for feminist sensitivities led Maguire to name the gaps between feminism(s) and PAR in theory and practice.

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<sup>5</sup> In the preliminary “cyber-dialogue” for the “Bridging the Gap: Feminism and Participatory Action Research Conference,” June 22-24, 2001, Pat Maguire said in a lengthy but informative narrative that distinguishes the gaps in both theoretical and practical terms, “My concern about that gap is not theoretical per se, but how theory then informs everyday practices - in this case practice of PAR- and the training of new PAR'ers. For example, it seems to me that one contribution of feminisms is to “theorize gender” (Kemps and Squire). So if there were less of gap a between feminisms (theories and how those theories inform everyday practices) and PAR, PAR would support understanding & exploring how gender (among other identities - such as race, ethnicity, class etc) influences how any of us, male and female, experience the universe on a daily basis. ...and then what that means in a particular context for a PAR endeavor. One way that is played out: recently a person asked me to look over a proposal being put together for a book on PAR and environmental issues. In the proposal there was no mention of feminisms and/or any intent to examine any of the issues that feminisms usually highlights - for instance, gender. Yet how can anyone look at environmental issues and subsequent development projects intended to address specific environmental issues (water uses, deforestation, small crop production, etc) without considering, among other issues, gender?”



Feminist Theory. Feminist theories challenge male bias in research, try to explain women's experiences,<sup>6</sup> and attend to women's different ways of knowing, power dynamics, critiques, and actions. Feminist theory encompasses a broad range of academic and activist fields, each with their respective histories, perspectives, research methods, and practice. Feminist research utilizes innovative methods and ethics that are congruent with the goals, priorities and values of feminisms (Shartrand & Brabeck, 2001). Feminist research distinguishes itself from mainstream research by grounding its priorities, assumptions, values, and goals in feminist theories.<sup>7</sup>

Feminist Approaches to PAR (FPR). FPR applies the principles of feminist theorizing and feminist research to PAR. The frameworks of FPR differ from PAR in that gender and women's issues are no longer peripheral but central to research literature and analysis (Maguire, et al, work in progress).<sup>8</sup> Feminisms add new meaning to the issues of:

- power, control, and knowledge construction within PAR, the academy and feminist research;
- Insider/outsider issues, including relationships across and between various individuals and groups;
- Interconnected relationships between local groups, communities and universities;
- Ethical dilemmas and the multiple meanings of feminism and feminist research.

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<sup>6</sup> The exclusionary nature of (Western) feminism, the privileging of white, middle-class North American and European women's experiences and the "false" dichotomies between Latin American feminists and "feminine" movements are noted elsewhere in this study.

<sup>7</sup> Feminist theory is not monolithic and encompasses a wide range of perspectives. Those most commonly recognized are: Conservatism, Liberalism, Traditional Marxism, Radical Feminism, Socialist Feminism, Women of Color, Feminism, Third World Feminism, Postmodern Feminism

<sup>8</sup> These issues emerged from a working conference entitled, *Bridging the Gap: Feminisms and Participatory Action Research* held in June, 2002 at Boston Conference with FPR researchers who include Mary Brabeck, Boston College; Mary Brydon-Miller, University of Cincinnati; Budd Hall, International Council for Adult Education; Alice McIntyre, Fairfield University; Patricia Maguire, Western New Mexico University; Rhoda Unger, Brandeis University. A book from this conference is forthcoming.

As a research approach, FPR emphasizes the importance of the subjective experience of the researcher and the researched as the basis for knowledge.<sup>9</sup> FPR rejects the objective stance of the impartial researcher and considers the multiple roles of the researcher as an educator, activist and organizer during the research process (Maguire, 1987). McDonald (2001) suggests that as the degree of engagement for FPR intensifies vis-à-vis these additional roles, so do the levels of care, commitment and immersion and reduces the inside/outside boundaries. The feminist researcher exposes, self-discloses, more of her or his lived experiences with the researched, rendering the reporting of research process as one with greater emotional involvement.<sup>10</sup>

These FPR concerns raise ideological and pedagogical questions for PAR.<sup>11</sup> The development of literature is underway to address the gap between feminist perspectives in

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<sup>9</sup> The notion of subjectivity—one's personal, unique collection of experiences that form a worldview—as an overarching framework has gained legitimacy in social science research since Thomas Kuhn published *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* in 1962. Critical theorist Jurgen Habermas (1996) named subjectivity an "inward space of one's own." The objective, value-free, detached stance of the positivist science research paradigm did not provide researchers, particularly women, with such a space. Feminist critiques of social science research claim that knowledge is socially constructed and argue that knowledge is power (Maguire, 1987). Women from the "hard sciences" redressed the bias in science promoted the idea that we cannot completely separate ourselves from what we research (Keller, 1982, Harding, 1994). Dorothy Smith affirms, "the only way of knowing a socially constructed world is knowing it from within. We can never stand outside it" (in Buckingham-Hatfield, 2000). Postmodern feminists view subjectivity as the embodiment of 'corporeal materialism', a space where the physical body is not *a priori* biological, but the "intersection of the natural with the cultural," a place "where multiple codes of power area at work" (Braidotti, at.el., 1993).

<sup>10</sup> Some examples of FPR are a project called, "Hospitality, Humility, Friendship and Family: Feminist Participatory Action Research (McIntyre and Lykes, 2001), "Participatory Action Research: From Within and Beyond Prison Bars," (Fine, et. al., 2001), "The Community-Academy Continuum," (Crisp, 2001) and "Understanding Muslim Women's Self-Identity and Resistance to Feminism and Participatory Action Research" (Barazangi, 2001).

<sup>11</sup> The following examples of concerns come from *Bridging the Gap: Feminisms and Participatory Action Research* conference, June 22-14, 2001 at Boston College: 1) How do feminist participatory researchers address the tensions/contradictions/surprises/connections that are generated between themselves and research participants? 2) What should we expect from ourselves when we claim to be doing feminist research and/or participatory action research? 3) How do researchers stand in solidarity with participants in a social space of collectivity where similarities and differences are acknowledged, problematized, and critiqued? 4) Who are the "gatekeepers" in the social sciences and how do their positionalities intersect with issues of power, control, access to resources, and self-and collective criticism? 5) How do feminist

PAR (Brydon-Miller, Maguire, McIntyre, Brabeck, McDonald, work in progress) and this research was solicited to be a part of that project (Maguire, 2001, personal communication).

Since one aim of FPR is social change, and as the researcher provides leadership during the research period, the transference of community leadership is crucial. To Maguire's FPR framework, McDonald (2001) adds four additional principles:

- Need for appropriate emotional, logistical and other forms of appropriate support throughout the research process,
- Understanding of the demands that assuming multiple roles places on the researcher, including those of leadership,
- Understanding all the implications of self-disclosure and exercising flexibility,
- Providing clarity to the researched community about leadership transfer at the onset of the project.

My PAR Experience. Participatory action methods have been an integral part of my organizing and educating experiences. I was first introduced to the epistemologies, ideologies and methodologies of PAR in the early 1970s as an educator of "popular education" in "oppressed" communities where I drew upon the early work of Paulo Freire (1970) and his stance of "education as liberation." In struggle and solidarity, I created

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practitioners of PAR combine activism and scholarship, detachment and participation, friendship and research? 6) How do university researchers bridge the gap between the university and local communities? Who benefits from those efforts and in what ways? 7) How do all members of the PAR team experience PAR within the context of a women's prison? What is to be gained from a PAR approach in the context of a prison—and in other contexts as well? What are the ethical issues involved in doing feminist research and PAR? How do underlying assumptions that exist in formalized codes and practices mediate the research process? 8) Feminist PAR is counter hegemonic and was developed in opposition to dominant research paradigms, many of them created, maintained, and sustained in and by university structures. So, what are FPRs doing? And, in making any difference in the structure of the university and the university's role in serving the interests of "the people?" 9) How does the university become a site for PAR? 10) How are feminists addressing the problems that arise from PAR?

educational environments conducive to the consciousness raising of silenced people (Freire, 1972). In church basements, elementary or university classrooms, I have used the personal story in oral, written, and visual forms where girls and boys, and women and men give their narrative account of economic, political and cultural struggles. Through words, pictures, and drama, the narratives provided a space for individuals to learn how race, class, and gender intersect with their environmental realities. I used these testimonies of the marginalized experience as a method of data collection to influence social change and policy planning.

Applying Feminist Approaches. As a feminist, I have been committed to a methodology that was both empathetic to, and congruent with my personal politics of social justice change, such as community organizing for gender equity, anti-racist work, and peace activism. These ideas are consistent with my understanding of the Baha'i teachings and are grounded in the conviction of individual and collective transformation. Also, I am a Latina woman living in the United States and am influenced by "Women of Color" feminist scholarship.<sup>12</sup> My subjectivities (the various parts of myself—gender, ethnicity, religion, and personal politics) influenced my experience as doctoral researcher in a Natural Resource Program. These subjectivities influenced this research in theoretical and personal ways.

Theoretically, general practice in mainstream social science research supports finding a problem to study followed by the selection of an appropriate research methods to get at answers to research questions. In the field of Natural Resources, the study of

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<sup>12</sup> This feminist perspective is comprised of a variety of different voices that share in common the idea that U.S. feminism was a Euro-middle class women's movement and exclusionary in its discursive practices.

methodology rarely presents as “the problem,” and current research methods gravitate to a “mixed methodology.” Like Maguire (1987) who entered doctoral research knowing that she would conduct PAR before she identified a setting or the problem, I, too, approached research in a reversed order. Maguire said, “...making the decision to try Participatory Research was doing things backwards. I had an approach in search of a problem” (p. 111). Norton, Maguire (1987) notes, states that PAR literature is “vague about how the research problem makes itself known, and how participatory research projects get initiated” (p. 111). Foregrounding participatory research is consistent with a discipline that promotes interdisciplinary solutions to complex environmental problems and emphasizes the social change action component of doctoral research.

Personally, I selected a research setting for a Natural Resource study that would bring me closer to my “imaginary home,” Latin America. Once I clarified my approach, I searched for research problem that addressed women’s equity and gender issues. I selected an ethnic group, indigenous cultures, for which I felt an affinity. Moreover, the research problem intersected with my own religious background.

Doing Research in the Baha’i Community. Ethnographic research distinguishes between friendship and rapport-building, and leans in the direction of the importance of rapport-building. In collaborative ethnography, such as in the case of co-authorship, the friend/researcher relationship is generally negotiated to avoid unmet expectations and conflict from misunderstandings (Glesne, 1989). Feminist perspectives in ethnography (Oakley, 1981; Stacey, 1988) and “caring,” relational research (Gilligan, 1997;

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Women of Color feminism stresses the community as a site for women’s struggles, the intersections between race, class, and ethnicity.

Noddings, 1984; Miller, 1976)<sup>13</sup> reduces the power differential to redefine the friend/researcher relationship. In PAR, the researcher becomes a co-participant to the community action process (Freire, 1970; Fals Borda, 1985; Rahman, 1993) and increased emotional demands in FPR influence the research/researched relationship. However, there is no literature about the role of the researcher or of “doing research” in the Baha’i community, even when the researcher is a member of the same community.

The Baha’i Writings, as well as those of policy sciences, admonish “rectitude of conduct” with regards to all human relationships. The “golden rule,” as a matter of speaking, professes one to “choose thou for thy neighbor that which thou choosest for thyself” (Baha’i Writings) and encourages the followers to be beyond forgiveness. The researcher and the researched—both of whom are members of the Baha’i community—should, at the end of the day, have no remorse for one another. This means the researcher is accountable to reasonably resolve the inevitable entangled relationships encountered vis-à-vis the research process. The individuals, who for a short period of time, categorized themselves as the researcher and the researched during the research period should return to the community events and celebrations as “the friends,” without animosity.

### Ethnographic-Oriented Approach to “Remaking” Development

I used an ethnographic-oriented methodology to conduct FPR in the field. I selected an ethnographic approach because these methods offer the postcolonial feminist

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<sup>13</sup> Nell Noddings, *Caring: A feminine approach to ethics and moral education*, University of California, Berkeley, 1984. Miller, Jean Baker. ([1976]1986). *Toward a new psychology of women*. Boston: Beacon Press. Gilligan, Carol. ([1982]1993). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. (2nd ed.) Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

researcher the greatest opportunity to “remake development” and gives grassroots groups the highest potential to participate in their own “remaking” (Escobar, 1995, p. 223).<sup>14</sup>

What distinguishes postcolonial research that deconstructs development from other writing that works “in” development is the knowledge of the ethnographer as one who has the capacity to validate or delegitimize informants’ voices (Marchand, 1995, p. 65).

The distinction is either on “text or author as agent” or on “interpreter as agent in collaboration with those concerned” (Hobart, 1993, p. 15). For researchers to attain the latter, Parpart (1995) notes Hobart who says we must “start with situated practices: what people did and what people said about it” (Marchand and Parpart, 1995, p. 240).

To that end, I approached this study as if it were a collaborative process whereby the participants of a development project were invited to engage in dialogue and construct knowledge about their experiences with the successes and failures of GAD. I hoped this knowledge creation would animate a transformative shift in the lives the people with whom I talked, which would, in turn, influence their communities. At all times in the research, I encouraged participation, and particularly sought out the women, who, mostly, deferred to their husbands to speak for them. By giving feedback to the

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<sup>14</sup> Postcolonial theory asserts Western research literature is embedded in its notions of the concept of *otherness*, which distorts the experiences and realities of present or past colonized people and continues to inscribe their inferiority. Meaning making in ethnographic texts has been about the construction and representation of the “other” and “otherness.” This stance has not, according to anthropologist Arturo Escobar (1995), ever taken up discussions of the fact that “it takes place within the post-World War II encounter between rich and poor nations established by the development discourse” (p. 15). That anthropologists have been either put “inside development” as applied anthropologists—working for the state or “outside development”—as champions of the authentically indigenous and “the native’s point of view”—NGOs—is not acknowledged in texts. This reluctance to address development in research leads to the ways anthropology “operates as an arena of cultural contestation and identity construction. The risk of not challenging development as a regime of representation, or the ethnographer’s purpose and motivation for research in the Third World (and First) is “no less pervasive and effective than their colonial counterparts”. Edward Said (1989) notes that anthropological research suffers from lack of any reference to American imperial intervention in theoretical discussion. Also lacking from literature is noting the

various stakeholders of the project and by acting as a co-participant, I took on the role of the peacemaker that resulted in mitigating some of the negative results of the 1989 TMCA project. I also engaged in a PAR situation whereby the participants produced knowledge development on their own terms and gained agency to articulate visions of their own futures.

I also used ethnographic methods to transform, analyze, and interpret the qualitative data I collected. Because the underpinnings of 1989 TMCA project is rooted in the non-linear approaches of systems and chaos theory, and in the transformational philosophy of the Baha'i Writings, I drew from this same point of view—systems thinking and Baha'i ideas—when I approached the interpretation phase of making sense of what the participants of the project shared with me about their experiences. Instead of looking at the isolated components of the changes in specific individuals or specific communities, I looked at how each part interacted with the whole, meaning the changes in the relationships between people and themselves, people and people, and people and communities. Then, I looked at how these changes fit into the larger context in which it is a part: the practice of race and gender in Bolivia, social and economic development in the Quechua Baha'i community, and in the greater international Baha'i community. Systems theory and the Baha'i teachings allowed me to integrate the ecological, cultural and spiritual dimensions with development. Without these dimensions, rural, indigenous communities will have difficulty sustaining themselves.

*Testimonio as “Authentic Listening.”* According to Marchand (1994) *testimonio* “denote(s) life histori(ies) of a political, denunciatory nature” which can be used to

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North's omission of “the sizable and impassioned critical literature by Third World intellectuals on colonialism, history, tradition, domination...and development” (Escobar, 1995).



“create a discursive space which would allow Latin American women from poor, working-class backgrounds to speak out and participate in the production of feminist theory” (Marchand, 1995, p. 58). *Testimonios* provide a “venue for (marginalized) Latin American women to participate in the production of knowledge about Gender and Development” (Marchand, 1995, p. 71). Found with the *testimonios* are “a goldmine of information, ideas and knowledge” (p. 70).

Unlike the popular first person *testimonios* given in the oral tradition by Elvia Alvarado, Rigoberta Menchu, Senora Aurora and Domitila de Chungara to a witness/translator, in this study my voice is intentionally present and woven throughout the *testimonios* (See Chapter 4). In doing so, I interpret the *testimonio* as a (post)development ethnographic methodology and as a method of feminist approaches to PAR. I justify the presence of my voice in the warp and woof of the narrative interviews, and call the ethnography *testimonios*, because as feminist postmodern and postcolonial writers on Gender and Development suggest, *testimonios* are “probably the *only* means for (marginalized) Latin American women to conduct their struggle(s) at the level of the production of knowledge” (p. 71) [italics mine]. These writers call for new ways to speak “‘near-by’ or ‘together-with’ rather than ‘for and about’” (Chowdhry, 1995) Third World women.

Development literature has represented First World women as the equally homogenized polar opposite of Third World women. As a first generation *Latina* American, I find this homogenization problematic. In this study, I designed a research objectives to explore how I can conduct research with women in Latin America. Brabeck (2001) suggests the *testimonio* situates the First World woman researcher as:

both insider, in the sense of standing in solidarity against oppression, and outsider, the sense of respecting cultural differences and acknowledging the existence of what the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize winner and author of the *testimonio* I... Rigoberta Menchu calls her “secrets” which anthropologists can never discover (Brabeck, “*Testimonio: Bridging Feminist Ethics with Activist Research to Create New Spaces of Collectivity*,” p. 4).

The (post)ethnographic approach to *testimonio* allowed me and those I researched—both of whom “agree(d) to give their testimony” (Marchand, 1995, p. 71)—to gain agency status. This new form of *testimonio* constitutes “authentic listening.”

In summary, the lenses through which I viewed this study were many. I drew upon feminist approaches to PAR and an ethnographic-oriented methodology as a way to accomplish FPR. I emphasized the Latin American literary genre of the *testimonio* as a way to legitimize the personal experiences of the women and men who told me their stories. I suggest the presence of the ethnographer’s voice in *testimonio* is legitimate and constitutes a new form “authentic listening.” The overarching frameworks were systems thinking about ecological and cultural sustainability, and my operative philosophy was the teachings of the Baha’i Faith.

### Description of Research Design

#### Research Objectives

This study was designed to address five research objectives to help me learn lessons from the 1989 UNIFEM/BIC “Traditional Media as Change Agent” Gender and Development implementation in the Bolivian site with Quechua women and men from the rural regions of the Chuquisaca department.

- 1) To determine, ten years after the initial intervention, what changes, if any, occurred in the lives of the Quechua women and men participants in the Bolivia site as a result of an early Gender and Development initiative funded and implemented through the strategic cooperation between two international organizations.
- 2) To specify the nature of the changes, if any, in the community as a result of this development intervention.
- 3) To identify whether and/or how the community supported, sustained or resisted these changes.
- 4) To determine whether the original goals of the project were met, and whether there were any unpredicted results of the project.
- 5) To identify what lessons can be learned to inform policy planners about gender development and about the long-term sustainability of the approach.

In addition, the study was designed to answer these contextual concerns:

- a) How has the evolution of feminist theory influenced development practices for women, and what are the critiques?
- b) What are the trends and patterns in development research and practice for women that influenced this project?
- c) What are the geographic, political, economic, cultural, and spiritual contexts important to understand in the Bolivian situation and the Quechua participants of this study?

- d) What are the institutional arrangements of the BIC, and how did/does the philosophy and ideology of the Baha'i Faith influence the implementation of this project?

### Data Sources

Primary sources of information came from the women and men participants of the 1989 TMCA project who live in the remote, rural regions of the Chuquisaca department in Bolivia. Other primary sources of information were the international, national and local institutions and organizations that funded, directed and implemented the project. The secondary sources of information were published texts, newspaper articles, magazines, and journals about the geographical, historical, political, economic, and cultural conditions of Bolivia, women and Quechua Indians. I recorded Field Notes of "rich" description from my observation and participation in the setting and of informal conversations with peripheral individuals or organizations that were not directly involved in the project itself but who had knowledge of the project.

I collected data using a FPR perspective with four qualitative data gathering methods: 1) formal and informal interviews 2) participatory observation, 3) *testimonios*, and 4) unobtrusive recordings. These research methods balance direct and indirect approaches to qualitative inquiry and were mixed to triangulate the data to assure "methodological rigor" (Patton, 1980).

Interviews. I designed two sets of focused interview surveys to yield qualitative data. I used formal surveys with the BIC (Baha'i International Community), the NSA (National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Bolivia), and GLOVIS (Global Visions,

Inc.) to gather historical information about the conditions leading up to UNIFEM and the BIC partnership for the 1989 TMCA project (See Appendix F). I asked broad questions about their worldviews towards development and gender, I asked specific questions about Bolivia, conditions for the Quechua and other indigenous groups in the rural areas, and I asked questions about their understanding of the 1989 TMCA implementation. The focused interviews included 20 open-ended questions and requested a few quantitative responses (Appendix F). All but one of these interviews was administered in English and all responses but those conducted on-line with Mona Grieser were audio taped. The interviews with the NSA were administered in the field; the GLOVIS interviews were administered in cyberspace because Mona Grieser, the 1989 TMCA Project Director and GLOVIS, Inc. CEO, was neither in the U.S.A. nor in Bolivia during the research period.

I used informal focused interviews with the project participants, the local project coordinators, and with peripheral individuals. The informal interview contained two parts and was more open-ended than the formal survey so I could move more fluidly with the informants' responses (Appendix G). Each interview began with the same opening questions but then I followed the informant's path instead of holding to the interview protocol. For example:

(Field Notes, 5/9/00) I abandoned my questions and my carefully translated Spanish to follow the flow of the interview and risked making errors with my Spanish. The negative impact of the project was made clear to me within the first two responses and what these men are saying take priority over my redundant questions that focus on aspects of the project implementation itself. I worry about how I will fill in the blanks for this study, but I was not in an institution now, I was on the top of the world, *sobre la cima del mundo*, covered by a blanket of thick stars. I was talking to people whose combined worldly possessions included a hut, some sheep, children and a bag of potatoes. Lucia was 38 years old, toothless and pregnant with her fifth child (her mother cares for the first). Even if nothing happened as a result of the project, that they are taking the

time to sit here in the cold talking to me, an *hermana* from the First World, then only by abandoning my questions can I hear the real stories.

I returned to the informal protocol for direction when needed and used another format when interviewing informants for whom I had copied photographs from the “Two Wings” video (Appendix H). Consent was obtained for all interviews (Appendix I) in accordance with protocols from the University of New Hampshire Human Subjects Requirements (See Appendix J).

Not one of the informal interviews was conducted in English. All but two interviews were conducted with a Quechua translator to whom I spoke either in Spanish or English and I used a Spanish/English translator when possible. When I spoke in Spanish, I drew upon the questions I translated from English to Spanish with a local person who was familiar with the particular Bolivian colloquialisms and with their meanings in the local Quechua culture. The informal interviews were translated into printed Spanish, which I used as an aid when necessary.

All interviews were audio taped on site and I transcribed most Spanish-to-Quechua interviews in the field with the assistance of two local fluent Quechua/Spanish/English speakers. Karen Rittendorf, a U.S. citizen living in Bolivia and Ecuador for 28 years and an early childhood and Spanish teacher, translated from English to Spanish. Ruhia Cardosa, a 27-year-old Quechua woman, translated and interpreted the interview questions and responses. Most often, these two women, both of whom live in Sucre, accompanied me to the rural areas. Miriam Beechee, a Bolivian bi-lingual woman who works for PLAN, a development NGO, helped translate two of the more technical Spanish interviews into English. The interviews in Spanish that I did not transcribe in the field were translated on return with the assistance of two New Hampshire Spanish

educators. Noel Joq-Cost, an ESL teacher in Newmarket, NH, lived in the Chuquisaca region from 1985-1990 and was very familiar with the local vernacular. Nancy Modern, a Portsmouth Spanish teacher, helped to translate a few interviews and verified the transcriptions of all taped Spanish interviews that I conducted in Spanish and translated into English.

This research yielded thirty-five hour-long interviews. The trilingual nature of the study required that I consult with a language “expert” with experience in Quechua and Baha’i culture. For example, a Quechua woman with limited Spanish proficiency, used a word that did not make sense to me. I was unwilling to ignore the word, particularly since the woman is married to an *amauta*, (an appointed spiritual leader of a rural community) and I thought her interview would be an interesting story since her husband appeared to receive more attention in the community than she did. She maintained a large household and ran the community potato-farming responsibilities. In Spanish, the word in question was *brincar*, which literally means “to jump forward.” Upon further investigation, I understood the verb to connote “to sprout from” as in “to come from.” The new meaning implied to me the notion of sustainability, and in fact, the passage becomes pivotal in the interpretation of the narrative and this study:

I would like that they (the children) stay here, that they learn their professions here so that in that way you are part of a community. There are teachers who come in and who can’t teach about our reality and they leave. We need people who live and learn here and then teach here so that everyone is living within their reality, within the reality of our same community. So, the people who are from here (*brincaban*) **come from** here, so we pass through all generations (emphasis mine) (J. Limachi, 2000, personal communication).

Some interviews were taped on a digital video camera with permission. No interviews were taped of individuals in the *campo*, nor did I seek permission to take pictures out of respect for the sensitivity to cameras by the indigenous people. However, videotapes were made when I provided technical assistance to communities after I completed all interviews (See Chapter 4, Section 3).

Participatory Observation. A researcher involved in complete participation as a full, active community member and a researcher as 100% observer with minimal interaction with participants are at two poles of a *dynamic continuum in qualitative inquiry*. Neither total immersion in activity nor non-interactive observation is likely to provide quality data. The optimal balance requires a combination of participation and observation (Kirby and McKennon, 1989, p. 80).

However, finding a fulcrum and maintaining a balance in the degree of participation and observation is difficult when using FPR, especially when the researcher assumes a leadership role in the community (McDonald, 2001). That the work is research further complicates the FPR researcher's triple roles of organizer, educator, and researcher because the researcher may have the tendency to possibly "contaminate" the research by actively engaging participants' actions such that the research project could succeed (Maguire, 1993, p. 162).

Although I entered the research setting as an "outsider," I was admitted as an "insider" because for 30 years I have been a member of the same spiritual and religious community as the participants I studied. I was intimately familiar with the Baha'i cultural context—social protocols, calendar events, religious celebrations, spiritual practices and sacred teachings—that allowed me to easily slip into the Baha'i community events in



Bolivia, either in the city or in the rural sites, without great difficulty.<sup>15</sup> I was introduced as *una hermana*, a Baha'i sister, to the Quechua Baha'i community members and was greeted by this group in the same way as were other members of the Bolivian community.<sup>16</sup> Also, that I was *Latina*, a friend of another Baha'i who lived in the community for five years in the late 1980s, and that I was there to talk about a project that many participated in, added to my "insider-ness" and therefore, my ability to participate as an insider to the community and as a researcher. Additionally, I did not travel alone; I brought my 15-year-old son for tacit approval and for whom the young women were eager to meet. However, to earn the kind of insider status that led some members of the Quechua Baha'i community to participate in telling me their story required that I become an outsider to others—friends and fellow community members—involved in the project.

Participatory Roles. An introductory meeting with the LSA (Local Spiritual Assembly) of Sucre marked my "official" participatory status in the community. The LSA offered their services to me for the duration of my visit and asked me if I would provide technical assistance to their social and economic development efforts and to the smaller, rural surrounding communities. I was then introduced to the greater Sucre Baha'i community as "Baha'i researcher" and SED (social and economic development) consultant to the community.

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<sup>15</sup> The only exceptions for a "traveling Baha'i" from community to community throughout the global might be, for example, differences in weather, food, language, or dress.

<sup>16</sup> The greeting is typically a handshake with the right hand while the left-hand touches the forearm and a kiss placed on each cheek. To be a sister, or a brother, to the Quechua connotes relations, and to Baha'is means all are part of the same human family.

My roles evolved throughout the study, but also changed from day to day. Some days, I was “researcher as friend” to many younger Quechua women and was invited to spend more time in their communities. I frequently “took off” for the weekend on “unofficial” research business to spend the night or weekend in the rural areas with these younger women—interview subjects—who wanted to “cook for me.” We’d ride the local *micros* (mini-buses), climb the Andean foothills, and walk the grassy fields where I would help prepare and eat the local food, listen to *churango*, a small stringed instrument, in the evening, and sleep on mud floors.

I was also “researcher as house guest/renter” when I lived with the local project coordinators in their home for one month. I participated in their family events and was included in their family activities, such as hand-washing clothes on the roof, afternoon lunches, birthday celebrations, and Sunday bike riding in the park. Not all “researcher as house guest/additional family member” experiences were pleasant. For example, I accidentally almost ignited one of the daughters when I left the oven pilot light on too long. Another time, I took back some silver wire that I used to weave necklaces. The silver was perceived as a gift although I intended to use it with others. Over time, I progressively transformed from “researcher as polite house-guest/renter” to another emotional family member. I became the “resented researcher.”

With the local community, I was “researcher as learner” and “researcher as *hermana* Baha’i,” when I participated in Baha’i community events.<sup>17</sup> When I traveled to other Bolivian cities to interview the president and director of Núr University, the NSA secretary respectively, I was a participant and observer of national community events and was introduced as “researcher on official business.”

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<sup>17</sup> These Baha’i community gatherings included the 19 Day Feasts, the Naw-Ruz celebration, community deepenings, “firesides,” and the National Convention with the National Spiritual Assembly.

Throughout the above participant activities, I continually shifted from participant to observer. I consciously did not use the tape recorder or record in my notebook during “off-time” social interactions to reduce participant anxiety and to minimize my role in the community as researcher. Therefore, I was “participant as observer” or “observer as camera” who, at night, or alone, maintained extensive field notes that included rich description of the social, economic, cultural and physical environment and the unfolding daily dramas and dynamics between the individuals I was studying.

*Testimonio.* The open-ended interviews provided the project participants the space to diverge from my questions and to tell me more about their experiences. As I spoke with women and men about their experiences, I kept my ears open for hints in their interviews that could lead to a *testimonio*. In FPR, asking questions and listening to responses is a dynamic process that builds relationship. Based on the nature of what was revealed to me in these *testimonios*, I believed that I was a trusted individual to receive the stories, and that the people I interviewed wanted me to know about the 1989 TMCA project, their experiences and their lives.

For many, giving their *testimonio* gave the participants their first opportunity to give voice to some rewarding outcomes, painful encounters, and challenging situations in their lives since the 1989 TMCA project. The interview became a narrative of a series of smaller stories within the overall larger scheme of their life story. Because the stories were told by “subaltern peoples”<sup>18</sup> “from the margins,”<sup>19</sup> and because some were more extensive than others, some

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<sup>18</sup> The term subaltern was taken from Antonio Gramsci’s euphemism for the proletariat in his Prison Notebooks. However the collective movement of Subaltern Studies used it as a catch-all term for all groups they viewed as oppressed - the proletariat, the peasantry, women, tribal people. (1971).

<sup>19</sup> Kirby and McKenna (1989) use the term “margins” in a structural sense to refer to those who not only suffer injustice, inequality and exploitation in their lives, but also who have been excluded from participating as either producers or participants in the creation of knowledge .

stories constituted life history research, or in the Latin America literary genre are called therapeutic public testimony. Not all life histories are *testimonios* but all *testimonios* reveal life histories. Cienfuegos and Monelli (1983) describe testimony as a verbal journey to the past that “allows the individual to transform past experience and personal identity, creating a new present and enhancing the future.”<sup>20</sup>

Unobtrusive Recording. To make an implementation evaluation study that was conducted in a relatively short time period “more ethnographic,” I drew upon the more traditional qualitative techniques of unobtrusive measurement to fill in the blanks to contextualize the 1989 TMCA project and its participants in the larger Bolivian and international setting. By using these measures in places with histories of silenced people, ethnographic-oriented studies can counter against essentialist and ahistorical accounts of people and places, and can highlight people’s emancipatory past.

The research was conducted against the backdrop of an 11-day “state of siege” because of the local struggle, or war as it has been called, for water rights in Cochabamba. During this period, I relied more on current newspaper journalism, both in Spanish and English, to gain a better understanding of the political, economic and cultural context than journal periodicals or texts.<sup>21</sup>

Also, I looked to walls, particularly those in the rural areas, as a site for local resistance and for relevant information. Multiple layers of graffiti and political acronyms, sprayed on

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<sup>20</sup> George Yúdice (1991) defines testimony as an *authentic* narrative, told by a *witness* who is *moved* to *narrate* by the *urgency* of a situation (e.g. war, oppression, revolution, etc.) Emphasizing *popular oral discourse*, the witness portrays his or her own *experience* as a *representative* of a *collective memory* and *identity*. *Truth* is summoned in the cause of denouncing a present situation of exploitation and oppression or exorcising and setting aright official history (p. 15-31).

<sup>21</sup> Journal articles for NACLA and a video, “War for Water,” by IWorld Communication drew upon the same eyewitness accounts in newspaper articles that I collected in the field.

cracked and peeling white-washed adobe homes in the cities or on free standing walls in villages, chronicized the rapid succession of political changes in Bolivia. The interior of Quechua homes, while not furnished in Western notions of design, displayed an occasional political poster, or lack of, to reveal an interview subject's political affiliation. The public, outside market and the local bus system were other sources of unobtrusive measures from where to measure division of labor, time, and socialization patterns.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, I used e-mail communications, NGO documentation (annual reports and position papers from UNIFEM and BIC), video documentation ("Two Wings"), and published doctoral research (Brooke, 1996) as additional data.

### Subjects

Overview. A systematic sampling was conducted of as many 1989 TMCA participants that I was able to locate during the research period. I interviewed 32 individuals in total, 14 of whom were the original participants. In addition to the project participants, a survey questionnaire was administered to most of the 1989 TMCA policy

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<sup>22</sup> I observed two other sources of information that revealed contradiction and paradox—hands and dirt. A journal entry from my field notes documents description of the setting and expresses the different meanings cultures and classes assign to work:

(5/11/00 Field Notes) Yesterday, while riding in an overcrowded bus back to Sucre from Tarabuco, a community known for its magnificent weavers, I began to doze off. The cacophony of the radio broadcast of a national soccer tournament blared from the speaker directly above my head. Relaxed, sleeping bodies bounced and fell in and out of each other's personal spaces. The arrhythmic beat of the bus's tires careening on the rocky, dirt highway filled the background sounds. To get a better sense of where I was in my body at that moment, I groggily opened my eyes and looked out the window. There I saw more of the brown, dry, dusty mountainous terrain I have become so accustomed to in the foreground, contrasted against the brilliant blue sapphire sky of the background. All around me sat women, from those too young to bear children, to the young clutching their sleeping babies, to the weathered and life-worn elders. In front of me, to the side of me, and behind me slept the workers of the world, those upon whose backs the rest of the world depends. I looked down at my hands, a little dirty from a day of travel, a little sticky from peeling or cutting fruits, bread and cheese, a little wrinkly and spotted by age and adorned with silver and gold. Then I looked at the hands all around me—overgrown nails, dirt embedded underneath so thick, skin creased, cut and scraped. On days when I've worked in my studio—sawing, hammering and soldering—I've

makers and institutions that were involved with the project design and implementation.

The interview sampling is divided into four groups:

1. Individual participants of the 1989 Traditional Media as Change Agent project,
2. Individuals directly involved in the 1989 Traditional Media as Change Agent project implementation,
3. Individuals indirectly involved in the 1989 Traditional Media as Change Agent project but with knowledge of the project,
4. Individuals indirectly involved with the 1989 Traditional Media as Change Agent project but with no knowledge about the project but with experience with the local context.

Individual Sampling. The interview sampling consisted of 34 interviews. All but three interviews (I-D) were conducted on site in the field. Although I had a professional relationship with the Program Director and CEO of Global Visions, Inc., before this research, I interviewed her through the Internet (I-D) because she was engaged in development work abroad. In addition, I interviewed the BIC (Baha'i International Community) WID director in Eliot, Maine after fieldwork during the summer of 2000 (I-D). I also interviewed the Cameroon Project Director in Orlando, Florida at a social and economic development conference for the Americas in December, 2000 (I-D).

In Group 1, there are 16 individual participants (I-P) who currently live or lived in rural villages in the Chuquisaca region of Bolivia. These participants are Quechua

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wanted to sit on my hands when they look like this, but at this moment, it was my relatively clean and smooth hands on which I wanted to sit.

speakers and are mostly subsistence farmers. In this group, 8 are women between the ages of about 21 – 55. Five are men between the ages of about 30 – 60.

Group 1 Individuals: Participants (I-P) total: 16

- (I-P) Anamaria
- (I-P) Sadai
- (I-P) Octavio/ Adente
- (I-P) Carmela
- (I-P) Eugenio
- (I-P) Gregoria
- (I-P) Fernando
- (I-P) Jacinto
- (I-P) Jania
- (I-P) Ximena
- (I-P) Graciela
- (I-P) Julio
- (I-P) Maruja
- (I-P) Vincuna Flora
- (I-P) Florencia

In Group 2, there are 9 individuals with direct involvement with the project implementation (I-D). All but two live in Bolivia presently and three are native to Bolivia. All individuals in this group have attended college, all but two have bachelor's degrees, and one is presently earning her "*licensiatura*" (bachelor's degree). All but two are active development practitioners.

Group 2 Individuals directly involved with implementation (I-D) total: 8

- (I-D) Carole Subert
- (I-D) Crystal
- (I-D) Dr. Ouladi
- (I-D) Mary Powers
- (I-D) Mona Grieser
- (I-D) Olga Banks
- (I-D) Herman Banks
- (I-D) Mirta Lopez

(I-D) Sabino

In Group 3, there are 9 individuals with indirect involvement with the project but with knowledge of its implementation (I-I). Of these 9, all have higher education degrees, one is a lawyer, and five have doctorates and two hold master degrees. All have direct, professional experience as development practitioners and all but two are prominent, published authors of development discourse.

Group 3 Individuals indirectly involved but with knowledge of implementation  
(I-I) total: 8

(I-I) Bill Hazelwood  
(I-I) Cristina  
(I-I) John Kepner  
(I-I) Juanita Hernandez  
(I-I) Deane Genge  
(I-I) Eloy Anelo  
(I-I) Maria Baria  
(I-I) Tiati

In Group 4, there are only two individuals with no knowledge of the 1989 Traditional Media as Change Agent project but who work as Peace Corp volunteers and have direct experience with the local site context (I-N).

Group 4 Individuals indirectly involved and with no knowledge of implementation (I-N)  
total: 2

(I-N) Ian  
(I-N) Virna

#### Locating Study Sampling: Finding the Women and Men

(Field Notes, March, 2002) In the field two years before, I realized I was like National Geographic photographer Steven McCurry, who searched for ten years throughout refugee camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan for the “Afghan girl with the haunting green eyes.” With help from the Baha’i



community, I, too, searched for “a needle in a haystack of haystacks” (McCurry, 2002, National Geographic).

I located the subjects of this study using three methods, each increasing in levels of participation. First, for more than a year before I arrived in the field, I was an “observer-from a far”; I viewed the “Two Wings” video to familiarize myself with the faces, places and activities of project participants during the implementation.<sup>23</sup> Secondly, to help me find the 1989 TMCA participants, I recreated the subjects on paper by using the software “Final Cut Pro” to capture still frames of about 20 individuals and community activities. I organized the photographs in a small book that I took with me to the communities. Thirdly, I located the non-participant women and men responsible for the administration of the project vis-à-vis the Internet. I accessed the global network within the Baha'i community to obtain the names and addresses of the local project implementers and institutions through the Project Director.

In the field, the local project coordinators helped me to put names to faces. Also, I was offered photo albums, original video footage of some of the project activities, and paper files that contained important letters and anecdotal accounts. Although the local coordinator expected to help me “find the people” in the field, two Quechua Baha'is helped me locate the study sample.

There was no set method for finding the people. I found people, women and men, while they were conducting their everyday, ordinary activities—chopping vegetables, harvesting potatoes, nursing babies in the *campo*, or attending classes, cleaning households, buying produce at the market in the city (Figure 4a, 4b, 4c).

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<sup>23</sup> HyperResearch is the only software tool that is compatible with Macintosh computers.

Figure 4a  
Finding the Women and Men



Figure 4b  
Finding the Women and Men



Figure 4c  
Finding the Women and Men



The 1989 TMCA project encouraged each Baha'i Local Spiritual Assembly that administered to the project to outreach to the larger community. In Bolivia, this community was represented by the *Sindicato*, the union. However, I only spoke with the Quechua members of the Baha'i community for this study .

Locating Study Sampling: Finding the Communities. Prior to arrival in the field, I searched through maps to find Phoqonchi, the only community I was told engaged in the 1989 TMCA project. Also, I asked Herman Banks via internet to help me locate the community. All I knew from the Project Director was that "I would be going to "the most remote place on earth," where "African huts are more luxurious" (Grieser, 2000, personal communication).

Originally and before I arrived in Bolivia, Herman Banks, husband of Teresa, the local project coordinator, offered to lend me his truck to drive to Phoqonchi. Once I arrived in the field, I learned that the truck and the roads would have been too difficult for me. Then, I learned that Teresa rearranged her schedule to take me to find the communities. But, as I learned more about the actual implementation from interviews

conducted with women and men who either had moved to Sucre or who were from there, that I might not gain the trust of the individuals whom I wanted to interview if I arrived with the Banks's. Sabino Ortega, an Auxillary Board member for the Quechua community, offered to take me to the communities at the end of one of our interviews.

(Field Notes, 5/9/00) We drove along precipice walls with vertical drops about 150 feet, rocky paths that made my fillings vibrate, and sections of complete ledge. We maintained a 180-degree view of the tip of the Andes all but for circular vistas of 360 degrees. We passed only one mule, one truck and two people walking as we ascended and descended a number of times until we reached what seemed to me as the top of the world. I recognized Phoqonchi first by the famed thatched roof, home to the feared vinchuga beetle that carries Chagas Disease.

As I stood in this open space, I transported to Wounded Knee on Pine Ridge reservation and felt the ghosts all around me. I then remembered Mona's comment, "you are going to the most remote place on the earth."

But, if that barren, dry and brown Mars-like terrain is the most remote place on the earth, then missing from these warnings, fears and imaginings was the possibility that the most remote place on earth could be magnificent, majestic, and Godly. In that remote and isolated place on top of the Andes beholding the indescribable beauty all around me, I felt the power and awe of a pre-Incan, pre-Colombian, and pre-Capitalism presence.....

(Field Notes, 5/20/00)...we turned the corner from a narrow cobblestone street to the dirt path that led to Puka Puka. The jeep continued to rattle and roll as we left the town of Tarabuco behind and climbed into the hills. To the right and left I saw the skeletal remains of hills, ribbons of eroded dirt and rock. If Phoqonchi was Mars, is Puka Puka the moon? We passed a few men walking to town and a large truck carrying men and women with babies on their back passed us. About twenty minutes later, we approached the few green fields and farms of Puka Puka.

(Field Notes, 5/25/00) The village (of Angostura) is not accessible by car, a small stream divides the village from the road. We crossed the river, either walking through the water or over stepping stones and walked about 15 minutes up a steep windy hill to the ridge. (Figure 5)

A woman holding her baby on her back was leaving the village as we arrived. We were told no one was here today.... We walked back down the hill, across the river and drove to the next village. The people were

not there. We drove to the next village down the road and were told people were back at the village that lies before Angostura. We turned around and drove back down the road. (Figure 6)

Figure 5  
Finding the Communities, Angostura



Figure 6  
Finding the Communities, Angostura



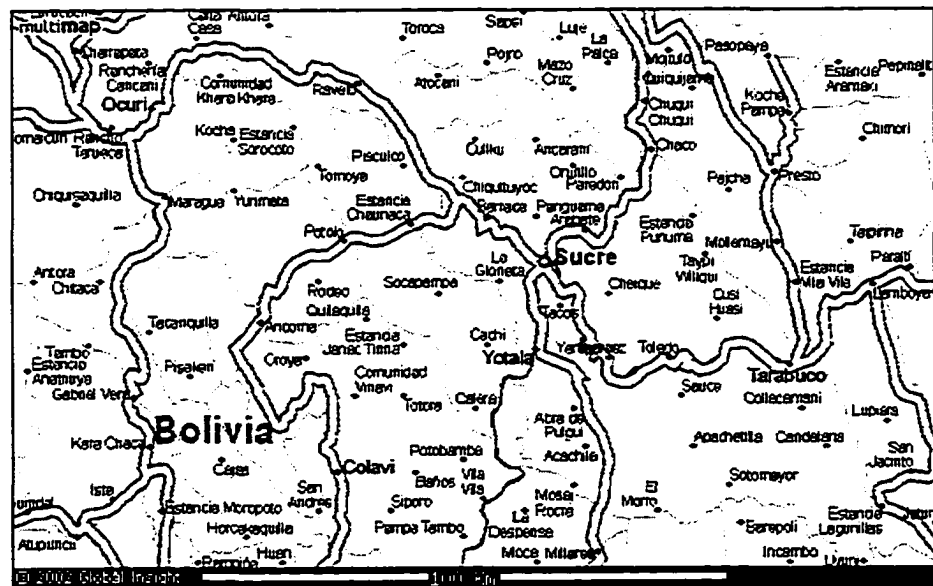
Community Sampling. I intended to sample all 6 community sites of the 1989 TMCA project. However, I only sampled 5 community sites, which I explain in Chapter 4. Four of the sites were rural Quechua subsistence farming communities, too small to

appear on regional maps. All communities are within the Chuquisaca department and are located within the central Andean *altiplano* region in Bolivia (Figure 7). A more detailed account of this region is included in Chapter 2 and the profile of each community is described in Chapter 4.

**Communities: total: 6 (C)**

- (C) Angostura  
(C) Phoqonchi  
(C) Puka Puka  
(C) Talawanka  
(C) Molle Punko  
(D) Sucre

**Figure 7**  
**Chuquisaca Department**



### Data Analysis

Analyzing ethnographic data is a dynamic interchange between data and the themes and patterns that the researcher observes and the researcher's own reflection and action process. Data analysis from a FPR approach, particularly when the research is cross cultures, requires that the researcher apply theories and practices of feminism(s) to this tension, so that along with moving back and forth from data, ideas, and reflections the researcher includes a power analysis of race and gender. Included in this analysis is also a critical examination of the researcher's own position on male domination and women's oppression and an understanding of the tensions between cultural traditions of gender oppression (Maguire, 1989).

Data collection and data analysis are two distinct but linked processes; in the field, I continually thought about the data while I continued to observe, participate, interview and investigate. In the field, I began a preliminary analysis of data when I read and reread the translated and transcribed interviews and began to loosely identify themes to help guide subsequent interview questions and research from secondary sources of information. Simultaneously, I made notes to myself about my hunches, intuition, which led me to ask my interview subjects clarifying questions. I gave priority to the responses from women, "the voices from the margins." I was attuned to women's broad interests and gender specific needs that define the social reality for women, which helped me to take research action.

For example, when I noticed that a number of women referred to domestic violence in their communities, either from their own past experiences when "women spoke up," or in families who "are not Baha'is," I studied violence against women in the Chuquisaca region. I visited the *Centro "Juana Azurduy,"* a local shelter and women's resource center in Sucre and spoke with the director and a social worker, and I visited a residential center for indigenous

abused women run by the Catholic Church. Then, when I noticed that one interview subject, a young Quechua woman who migrated to the city for higher education, had changed her appearance—first, her from her indigenous attire to the traditional *cholita* [urban Indian] dress to Western style, I studied the *mestizaje* process. I then included in my interviews with particular women deeper questions about dress, what it means to be indigenous, and cultural production in Bolivian schooling.

Once I returned from the field, I let the interviews “sit” while I recorded field notes about my reentry process of “being here” while still “feeling there.” During this time, I continued literature searches of new texts to help me better understand my field experiences (Luynx, 1999; Stephenson, 1999). I developed more categories and began to draw systems maps of the relationships between the categories: in field notes, my dreams, and even on restaurant napkins. In other words, the data came alive and I was living it—while it “sat.”

I transcribed and translated the remaining interviews in five months. Also, I verified the translation of interviews. Finally, I began the formal coding process. I used three methods to code data and followed a trial-by-error approach. First, I used traditional anthropological methods—scissors and glue—to cut, paste, and organize each interview from a paper copy. I abandoned that approach because the large quantity of data was unwieldy to manage. Then, I used visual devices to help me better “see” themes and patterns (Kirby & McKenna, 1989), such as creating categories on newsprint paper and mapping codes on small paper. I created a systems map by drawing arrows to connect codes to themes to reflect their causal relationships. I number coded each card to match an interview and matched the interview section with the card. I hung many pages of newsprint maps on the wall near my desk. While this method allowed me to see connections and relationships, I abandoned that method once the cards began



to fall off the wall. Eventually, I used “HyperResearch,” a qualitative analysis software program, and coded all interviews with greater depth and detail on the computer.<sup>24</sup> After about six months of analyzing each interview, paragraphs and words, and with an overwhelming total of 150 codes, I lost sight of the whole picture. I let the coding “gestate” while I wrote the historical, conceptual, and contextual background chapters.

To transform data into meaning, I revisited my study questions and developed matrices. To determine change “as a result” of the project I placed the participants’ names on a vertical axis and categories related to change on the horizontal axis. I first used the categories: “change,” “no change” and “maybe change.” Then, I drew from the raw, uncoded interviews and the HyperResearch coding and proceeded to analyze each interview according to each question and illustrated the change with the interview subjects’ words and my anecdotal accounts.

In the middle of that analysis, I began to question this methodological approach. I realized that depending upon how I thought about change determined how I analyzed the data for change. Change could be positive or negative and no change is different from negative change. I went back and redesigned the matrices with the categories: change, positive change and negative change, and analyzed the data once again but, this time, I had very different results. My subjectivity had begun to influence how I perceived and analyzed the change. I had begun to quantify the change.

Wolcott (1994) says “analysis pulls data transformation toward the more scientific and quantitative side of our work” (p. 174) and brings out the “closest quantifiers”

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<sup>24</sup> I was registered to attend a HyperResearch workshop in New York for the weekend of September 15 and 16, 2001 to learn how recode and to apply the software to the next stages of analysis. The workshop was canceled because of restricted travel into New York City after September 11, 2001.

(p. 176).<sup>25</sup> With this focus, analysis is presented to be “correct,” “dependable, accurate, reliable—in short, of being right” (p. 174.)

However, in the methodology I used for this study, “being right” was not my goal. Geertz (1973) said it is “not necessary to know everything to understand something” (p. 20). There were too many variables in an implementation study of a development project that occurred ten years ago in a politically unstable Third World country to get it right. I could only hope to understand some things.

Data Interpretation. Interpretation, according to Wolcott (1994), on the other hand, is an intuitive sense that *bends* the researcher towards getting “something” right (p. 174). If analysis transforms data, then interpretation transcends data to create, with the participants, new knowledge (p. 258). Interpretation is a political process (Kirby & McKenna, 1989) and the movement from analysis to interpretation required, first, that I now shift my view from analyzing the parts of the interviews to looking at the interviews as a whole and in relation to one another. Secondly, I remembered my role as a co-author of creating collective knowledge. This does not mean to partially construct, or misrepresent the people with whom I spoke, as ethnographic authorship has done, but represent the people with whom I spoke through their *testimonios*. These stories contextualize and historicize Third World women’s (and men’s) practices and experiences. To situate life experiences as a form of resistance to dominant discourse personalizes development, which, for women is:

a highly gendered process which starts at home. Thus, not only is “the personal political,” “development is personal” as well (Marchand, 1995, p. 71).

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<sup>25</sup> In this category, Wolcott includes the majority of social science researchers and includes beginning researchers and doctoral candidates.

The Researcher's Role. I played an unusual role in the Baha'i community I was studying. Since there are very few academic studies of Baha'i-related events or projects conducted by Baha'is, I had few guidelines to follow. On the one hand, because I am a member of the Baha'i community, I followed the usual protocol for Baha'is traveling abroad and was treated by the institutions and individuals as a "traveling Baha'i" and treated with the same generous hospitality afforded all visitors. But, on the other hand, I was also a researcher from the outside. Because the Bolivian implementation did not achieve the expected results and because there were "personnel difficulties," I was like an uninvited guest who "mucked up" a situation that many key players of the 1989 TMCA project tried to "brush under the rug" years ago. I stirred up feelings of anxiety and suspicion for some, and feelings of curiosity and relief for others. Inevitably, I became entangled in relationships vis-à-vis the research process. Because the Baha'i Writings admonish a "rectitude of conduct" with regards to all human relationships, I was often torn with conflict and contradiction, and confused between my role as researcher and my role as a Baha'i.<sup>26</sup>

My role as participatory researcher was difficult, and I was challenged about how to conduct action research. My presence confused most people because the research was not driven by outside evaluators for the international agencies involved and was for my own purposes. Although the research was participatory and action based, no one from the

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<sup>26</sup> Although the friend/researcher relationship is negotiated in traditional ethnography, feminist ethnography, PAR and FPR, there is no literature about "doing research" in the Baha'i community, even when the researcher is a member of the same community. I operated on the principle that, at the end of the day, the researcher and the researched, both of whom are members of the Baha'i community, should have no remorse for one another. The roles of researcher and researched are short lived. I lived my role as researcher with the thought that I should be able to return to the community and participate in events and celebrations with "the friends," without animosity after the research period. To that end, I continued to mend relations long after the research period.

setting invited me in to do so. I didn't perform any of the village participatory action techniques of the original 1989 TMCA project and based most of the research on interviews/*testimonios* about gender and development.

Overall, my presence in the community was awkward at times. I felt intrusive asking questions about members of local and national Baha'i institutions and the project coordinators. Many times, my questioning bordered on gossip and backbiting which is shunned. I disrupted the daily routine of the women and men I interviewed, many of whom work to survive. I felt angry about the mistakes of well-intentioned individuals and uninformed institutions, and I struggled to not project my feelings. I was constantly torn between my responsibility and accountability to the people for whom this study speaks.

However, there were many aspects of this research that were gratifying and I did play a significant role in the Baha'i community. I was a visitor from the North and the community was excited I selected their community to visit. At first, the project coordinators were thrilled with my interest in the 1989 TMCA project and extended themselves to provide information and perceptions about their experiences. I was welcomed into their family. Even though this couple did not want to revisit the difficulties in the original implementation, the wife, Teresa, finally decided to address lessons learned for her current *licenciatura* (bachelor's degree) thesis.

Both the urban and rural Quechua were eager to share their stories once they understood the purpose of my visit. Most of the young women were particularly fond of me and wanted to spend more time with me and trade craft skills.<sup>27</sup> The women and men

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<sup>27</sup> I brought silver wire to weave chains. The young girls and women were intrigued by this skill and wanted me to teach them. I left wire and materials with some of the women.

were fascinated by my hybrid identities and were curious about my Colombian indigenous roots. The Quechua respected that I traveled with my son as a tacit and some men attempted to teach my son to play the *churango*, a small stringed instrument. The women asked about my age, the rest of my family, and my education. They were mostly amazed that I still had my teeth in my mouth considering my age and the number of children birthed. I was a positive role model for the Quechua women who were also struggling to speak Spanish, raise a family and consider education. To many, I was a confidant and a person to whom hard and forbidden questions, such as family planning and contraception, could be asked when the men were not looking.

Even though I had been a member of the same religious group as those whom I interviewed for thirty years, and had an insider's advantage to the spiritual influences shaping their lives, I approached this research with a seeker's eye and genuinely sought greater understanding of those visionary goals of world peace, the achievement equality of women and men and the elimination of all forms of prejudice for personal, as well as for research reasons.

Finally, I provided service to the indigenous community as an "animator" of a participatory social and economic development process where I was able to stimulate the kind of social change I intended for this study.

PAR Revealed Itself. Conducting a unilateral PAR study designed for doctoral research is "the antithesis of PAR," and challenges in PAR academic research include how to initiate PAR with a community (Maguire, 1993, p. 162). In the proposal stage of this research, while I was studying what it means to conduct PAR as doctoral research, I strategized ways to engage the participants of the 1989 TMCA project in a participatory

process for social change. Like other researchers for whom the “why,” the ideologies and epistemologies of PAR and the “how,” the practice of PAR, were more important than the “what,” the specific community context from which PAR would emerge, I was looking for a way to “give voice” to the “culture of silence,” or as Hall (1993) said, to give people “the right to speak.” Initially, I proposed that I might recreate the village participatory action methods used in the original 1989 UNIFEM/BIC “Traditional Media as Change Agent” project as a way for the participants to interactively participate in a process from which I could learn the answers to my study questions. I abandoned this idea when I realized recreating the original project process was manipulative, contrived, and would detract from my goals. I considered testing a health pilot program for Chagas Disease prevention through a grant from NUR University in Santa Cruz. In this way, I hoped that I could work along side the women and men in their everyday community activities, “stand in the shoes of another,” and administer my own study.

Once I arrived in the field, however, I was asked to meet with the LSA of Sucre for an introductory welcoming meeting. They offered service and support and I reciprocated their offer by offering them “social and economic development” (SED) grassroots technical support.<sup>28</sup> The LSA asked me if I would provide a two-day weekend *cursillo* (workshop) for both the Sucre community in Spanish and another one for the indigenous Regional Council<sup>29</sup> in Quechua. I accepted and the PAR opportunity I, as outside researcher, was looking to initiate came to me from the inside. Through service, I would become a “real” PAR researcher.

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<sup>28</sup> As I discuss further in the last section of Chapter 5, I was trained in the Mottahedah Development Services (MDS) community social and economic development process. MDS is a development foundation that provides a systemic and systematic approach to community development at the grassroots level.

The Gender Lens and FPR Reciprocity. In the PAR situations, I made an intentional effort to include the women, who, whether at the *Sede* in Sucre or in the hut in Puka Puka, were either nearby listening as they peeled the potatoes and prepared the meals or sitting in the same room but on the sidelines. I drew the women into the activities and when the participants shared with the larger group, I showcased their contributions.

Although I attempted to engage all the women, I missed many, and, once I realized whom I missed, I paid attention to what they were doing. For instance, during the *cursillo* at the *sede* in Sucre, I excused myself for a brief moment during the afternoon session. Although most of the women who began the group process remained with the group inside, I found a larger group of women, many of whom I had not seen before and assumed to be the partners of the participating men, with their girl children, near the outside water faucet. These women and their daughters were combing out their wet hair in the sun. It was Saturday, the sun was hot, and clean water flowed freely. A dirty puddle at home was their alternative.

### Summary of Methods

To summarize, the key characteristics of an ethnographic-oriented feminist PAR approach that helped me design a study that yielded *testimonio* accounts in a highly male dominated society were:

- To privilege the methodology over the “problem,” while simultaneously selecting a research topic that would be conducive to FPR,

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<sup>29</sup> Regional Councils relatively new mid-level organizational bodies with a specific mandate and link the Local Spiritual Assemblies to the National Spiritual Assemblies.

- To make gender and women's issues central to the research and analysis,
- To listen to the women and men agree who agreed to give their story with the purpose of hearing what they want me to know,
- To understand male domination and women's oppression within the context of colonialism,
- To engage as a co-participant in a community action process, and to make a conscious distinction between "author as agent" or "interpreter as agent in collaboration,"
- To give grassroots groups the opportunity to participate in their own "remaking" of development,
- To contextualize a study conducted in a Third World country within the development context,
- To continually assess inside/outsider privilege and challenges,
- To actively reflect on my position as a woman, a Latina, and a Northerner,
- To seek collegial support during the analysis process from like-minded feminist participatory action researchers.

The next chapter contains the *testimonios* Quechua women and men shared with me about their experiences with the 1989 TMCA project. The chapter is prefaced with a description of the settings, the communities where the participants live, and an oral history story that explains the origin of their "spiritual rebirth" and the framework that defines their realities.



## CHAPTER IV

### *TESTIMONIOS* FROM QUECHUA WOMEN AND MEN ABOUT GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

#### Introduction

The introduction to Chapter IV, in which the women and men speak through their *testimonios*, is divided in two sections. The first section, “Description of the Setting,” paints a broad stroke landscape of the spaces and places where the participants live. The second section, “Keeping History Alive,” provides an oral history account of the origin of the Baha’i Faith in the lives of these Quechua people.

#### Description of the Setting

The setting where these *testimonios* were freely given occurred in three rural communities in the Chuquisaca region: Phoqonchi, the first implementation site, Puka Puka and Angostura, two of the four additional communities. I interviewed a woman from Molle Punko in the urban center of Sucre and I was unable to visit Tallawanka. According to a system used by PLAN, an international humanitarian NGO in Bolivia, families might live close together in one place, and other families are dispersed in the countryside, but not far from each other. The dispersed community describes a situation rural communities in Bolivia are categorized as: nuclear, semi-nuclear, and dispersed.<sup>1</sup> A

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<sup>1</sup> There are a number of criteria and terms to describe community organization. I select those used by PLAN primarily because they are one of the largest and most active NGOs in rural Bolivia and because it serves some of the communities I visited. The categories describe the spatial arrangement and physical distance of the housing structures and are not to be confused

nuclear community describes a situation where all homes are built close together and arranged in walking distance to one another. In a semi-nuclear community, about twenty where homes are widely scattered (Figures 8a, 8b, 8c). Of the five rural community samplings, the Angostura community is nuclear, Phoqonchi is dispersed, Puka Puka and Molle Punko are semi-nuclear and Tallawanka cannot be categorized because a site visit was not possible.

According to the rural indigenous people, however, communities are still organized according to the *ayllu*, a pre-Colombian basic social unit, which was originally comprised of stratified kin groupings that held common land rights (Klein, 1982). Since the collapse of the nationally owned industrial formal sector and growth of neoliberalism, hegemonic attempts to restructure the *ayllu* remain unsuccessful. Today, efforts towards indigenous self-determination center on the community's ability to restore the integrity of the *ayllu* (Osco and Condoreno, 1999).

Quechua and Aymara leaders of the *ayllu* are given a title that corresponds to the category of community structure, and since the popular reform laws of the early 1990s, the Bolivian government is required to acknowledge these indigenous authorities elected

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with the types of structures or the familial organization within the structures. Anthropologists of Andean civilization suggest the spatial and social organization of communities were influenced by the "altitudinal compression of ecozones" (D'Altroy, 1999) that are characterized by the extreme physiographic features, such as the high mountain ridges or deep valleys of the Andean region (D'Altroy, T. 1999).

Figure 8a  
Nuclear Village

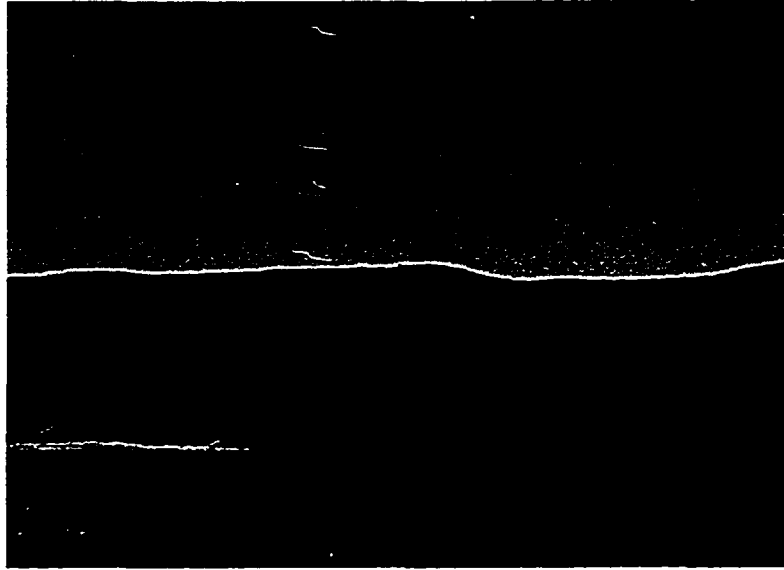
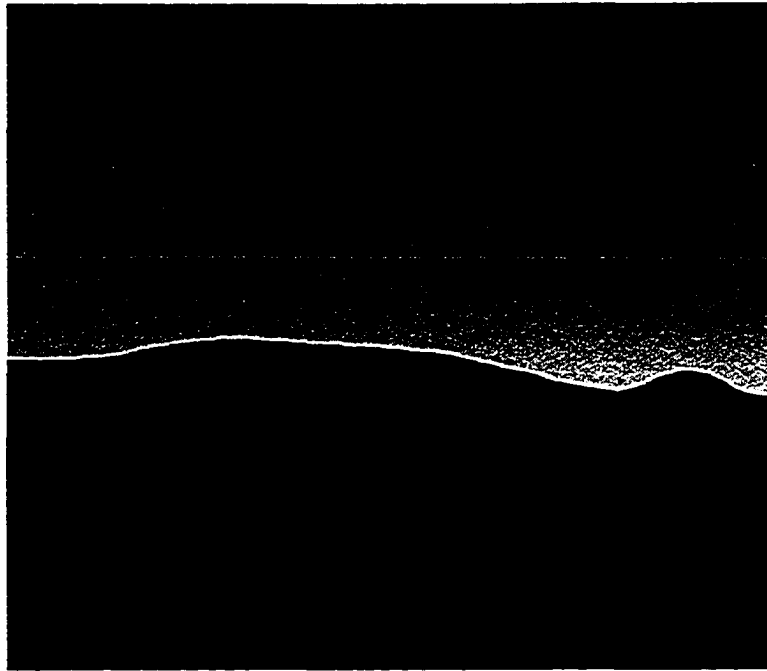


Figure 8b  
Semi-Nuclear Village



Figure 8c  
Dispersed Village



by the people to represent their community; the leaders are recognized by the government as the “officials” of the community. For instance, the *sindicato* is a group of union workers, the *alcaldes* are the authority of a city or small town, the *corregidor* is the authority of a small, isolated town and the *amauta* is the spiritual leader of a small, rural town. All but one of the communities where the people I interviewed live has an active *sindicato*, and in one community, the *alcalde* and *amauta* were participants of the original 1989 TMCA project and were interview informants for this study.

Phoqonchi: *Sobre la Cima del Mundo* (On the Top of the World).

(Field Notes, 2/17/00) Mona (the Project Director) warned me to “be prepared for barren.” She said I’ll be going “to the most remote region in the world” and warned me that she’s “been in African huts more luxurious than Phoqonchi” (Grieser, personal communication, 1999).

(Field Notes, 5/9/00) I recognized Phoqonchi first by the famed thatched roof, home to the feared vinchuga beetle that carries Chagas Disease. We were greeted at by the chair of the Local Assembly of Phoqonchi who welcomed us into his home with a hand shake, a smile, the customary hug of a half-embrace and “Allah’u’abha, hermana.” He placed a *pullo* (blanket) on the dirt floor for each of us to sit. Three little children, each maybe just nine months apart, ran up to us and slid away hugging the sides of the adobe wall. We were each given a bowl with three potatoes and a spoonful of blue corn cut from the cob served in a chipped enamel dish similar to the ones we use at home for camping.

Phoqonchi is a small, dispersed village community on the top of an Andean ridge.<sup>2</sup> The community is about 20-25 miles northwest from Sucre, located half way between Sucre and Poroma, a larger Quechua farming community. Despite the relative short distance from the city, the drive from Sucre requires a heavy truck or jeep and can take up to 2 1/2 to 5 hours of driving time in good weather (Figures 9a, 9b). The roads are extremely poor, “some of the worst roads in all of Bolivia” (Hazelwood, personal conversation, 2000) and winds steeply around the edges of mountain cliffs. The road is completely washed out during the rainy summer season from about September to March, and in good weather crosses under waterfalls in areas. The land is poor, even for potatoes, and the farmers must leave the village to farm either locally in the valley beyond the ridge or leave the region all together. Travel within the community is on foot, along sheep paths that connect the houses to one another. Thatched roof homes are adobe

(mud, straw and stone), without furniture, and *pullos* (woven blanket) are used for sitting upon the dirt floors. Inside these thatched roofs, in this particular Andean *altiplano* region, live the *vinchuga* beetle, the carrier for the flagellate protozoan parasite, *Trypanosoma cruzi*, that causes the deadly Chagas Disease. The water from one small stream in the valley is used for drinking, cooking and bathing. There are neither sanitation facilities nor latrines. Ten years ago, a cholera epidemic seriously affected the community; a number of members from the Local Spiritual Assembly (LSA), who were participants of the 1989 TMCA project, died.

At the time of the project in 1989, Phoqonchi was “an alive” community. There were about 75 families scattered throughout the ridge. The Baha’i community was active with about 20 Baha’is, and the community built, with the support of Baha’is in Sucre, a Hazrat-al-Qutb (local center). Also, the community had a school for which the Bolivian government provided a teacher.<sup>3</sup> The school was located at the rear of a small, cleared

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<sup>2</sup> Most NGOs in Bolivia do not fund dispersed communities. Due to their limited budgets, NGOs select semi-nuclear or nuclear communities to service greater populations. However, the first project implementation site, Phoqonchi, is a dispersed community.

<sup>3</sup> The Bolivian government is obliged to provide a teacher for rural communities with 20 or more students.

Figures 9a,  
Phoqonchi: *Sobre la Cima del Mundo* (On the Top of the World)

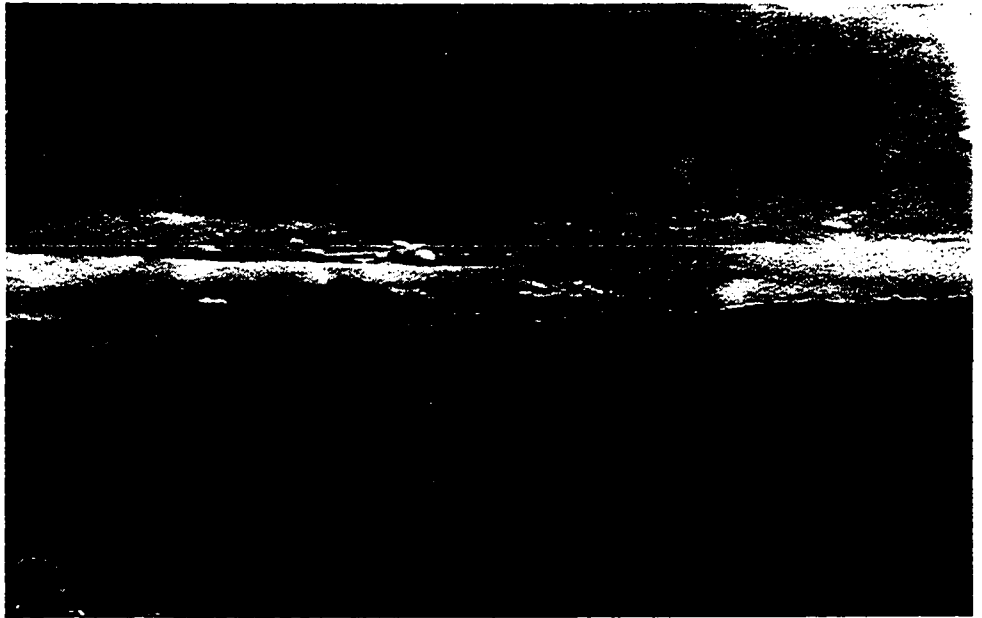
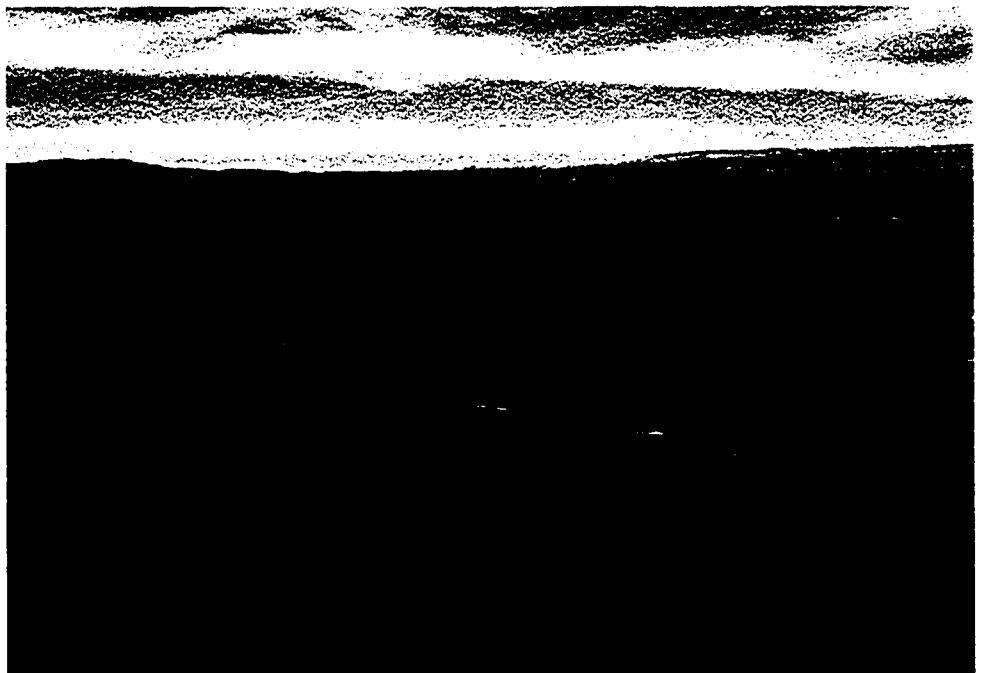


Figure 9b  
Phoqonchi: *Sobre la Cima del Mundo* (On the Top of the World)



field. This open clearing was the used as the site for the 1989 project's "festivals" shown in the "Two Wings" video documentation.

(Field Notes 5/9/00) Before supper, we walked along sheep paths that led to more of the dirt road that eventually dead-ended into what I recognized from the *Two Wings* video as the site of the large gathering/media presentations. At either end of this empty, dusty space stand two soccer goals made from thin, cut tree branches. At the end of the far goal are two abandoned adobe huts with thatched roofs, home of the former school. I now stood where I had imagined myself for more than two years as I watched the festivals in the video over and over again. At that moment, on top of the Andes, I was transported to Wounded Knee where one can still feel the lingering and haunting ghosts. The sun set, leaving us in the dark, standing on the dry, barren Mars-like terrain.

Presently, there are only "one and a half families left" in Phoqonchi as full-time residents. *Los demas* (the others) farm outside La Paz in the Aymara *El Alto* region or work in Santa Cruz, and return after the harvest for the remainder of the year. The school is now closed and the soccer field that was once held the gathering site for festivals is deserted. With regards to the Baha'i community, one informant revealed, "*la comunidad es muerto*" (the community is dead). Despite the dry, barren, brown terrain, Phoqonchi, with its 360 degree vista of the Andes Mountains, is "magnificent, majestic, and Godly" (Field Notes, 5/9/00).

#### Puka Puka, A "Gem" Amidst Eroded Red Rock .

(Field Notes 5/8/00) We walked to the end of the narrow cobble stoned street passing little stores and doorways that opening into *chicha* (fermented corn) bars. The road turned into the dirt and wound for miles through red dusty hills, chiseled by time and erosion to Puka Puka. If Phoqonchi was Mars, is Puka Puka the moon?

Puka Puka is a two and a half hour walk into the mountains from Tarabuco, or a twenty minute ride in the back of a truck for a couple of *Bolivianos* (\$1.75). Tarabuco is



a large community in the southwestern region of Chuquisaca known throughout Bolivia for its detailed, beautiful weavings, many of which come from Puka Puka. While buses from the major cities transport tourists to Tarabuco's Sunday market, Puka Puka does not attract visitors. There are about 90 families in Puka Puka, and at this time, 80 are members of the Baha'i community.

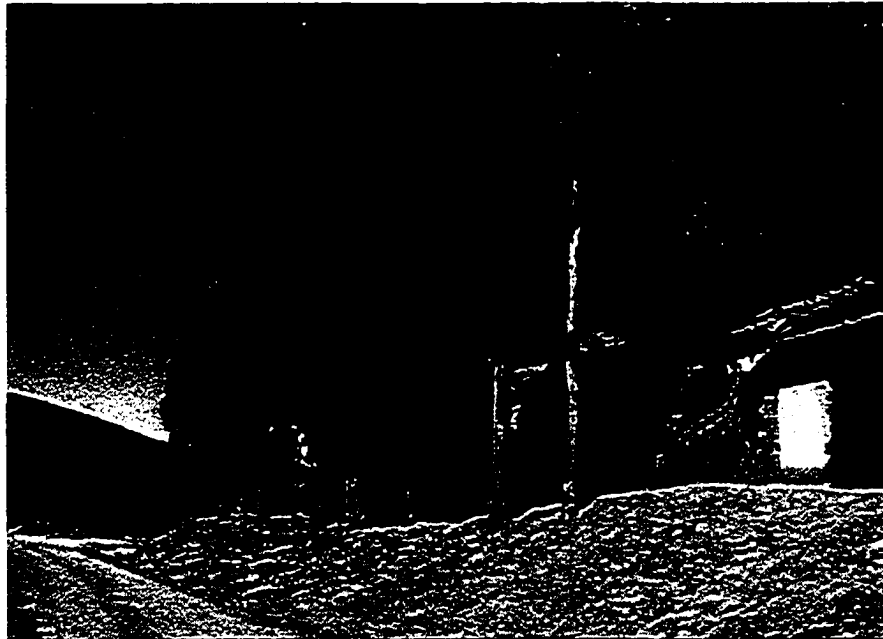
The Quechua word for "red rock," Puka Puka is on parched, highly eroded and barely fertile, loose, reddish dirt. A riverbed runs through this semi-nuclear village, bringing water to the potato farms half the year; the other half of the year the bed is dry. Clumps of eucalyptus, planted by development to counteract erosion and to provide oil for exportation, are common to this region and provide shade, but draw from what little moisture is in the ground. The economy is subsistence, most families grow potatoes; richer families raise pigs, which they sell or barter at market for tea, bread or adobe brick.

While the region is renowned for its weavings, this small, remote community is known throughout the Bolivian Baha'i world as "a star community," "a gem" (Anelo, personal communication, 2000). The hills outside Puka Puka have spiritual significance, as do those in Angostura, the next community described below, because it was in those hills about thirty years ago that the *ancianos caminantes* ("Ancient Walkers") roamed, young and old Quechua men who sought to end the silence. Discouraged by the treatment of the Catholic Church, the high rate of alcoholism, and encouraged by the hope for self-determination, large numbers of men and women "enrolled" in Baha'i community, (Anelo, personal conversation, 2000). Under the leadership of the Baha'i Local Spiritual Assembly, the community consulted on how to "rise above" the current oppressed conditions and built a model school (Figure 10a, 10b), with the addition of one

new grade each year, and with the eventual goal of establishing a university (Ortega, personal conversation, 2000).<sup>4</sup>

A handful of young girls from Puka Puka who left the area to travel throughout the region emerged as “*maestros viajeros*” (travel teachers), and much of the growth of the Baha'i Faith throughout the rural areas is attributed to the efforts of these young girls. Most of these girls participated in the 1989 TMCA project and a couple of the girls have since become involved in development work and attained higher education.

Figure 10a  
Puka Puka Elementary School



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<sup>4</sup> The University of NUR's rural education program in Santa Cruz was instrumental in training teachers for this school.

Figure 10b  
Puka Puka Elementary School



Angostura. West of Sucre, towards Cochabamba, the roads are good and the weather is warmer. Driving from Sucre, about 150 miles west, and through a number of “developed” NGO supported communities, is Angostura. The village is nuclear, small houses are clustered together off the side of a mountain and set away from the road and across a dry riverbed. The land is fertile; the people of Angostura farm and sell green vegetables at the market. Other *ancianos caminantes* originated from Angostura whose descendants moved to Sucre to become steadfast indigenous Baha’i believers. (Figure 11)

Figure 11  
Angostura



Sucre. Most noted as the “White City of the Americas” or “The Colonial City” because of its impressive whitewashed colonial structures that line the narrow, and often cobble stoned streets, Sucre is the Bolivia’s judicial capital and home to the majority of the country’s colleges and universities. Surrounded by historic *cerros* (hills) that are marked by monolithic status of Christ on the cross and gangling Eucalyptus trees, Sucre is named after the Venezuelan General Antonio José de Sucre who fought with Simon Bolivar, the Liberator. So prominent is education to this largest urban center in Chuquisaca that the streets are continually lined with children and youth walking to or from classes for the morning, afternoon or evening sessions. While the Aymara populate La Paz, the Quechua inhabit Sucre’s total population of approximately 160,000. Not only is Sucre Bolivia’s university center, Sucre is also a congested and bustling commercial district.

The Quechua migrate to Sucre generally for cash income in the informal sector, and while many have permanently relocated, a large portion of the Quechua travel in and

out of the city from their rural villages to sell in the *mercado campesino* (indigenous market). Employment for Quechua men usually includes bus driving, construction work, and street peddling. Quechua men may be employed in other ways but because only the Indian women are marked for their ethnic identity and the men identified only by language, they disappear in the larger population. The women work as *empleadas* (domestic workers) in the home, or as vendors on the street, or in the market.

Keeping History Alive: An Oral History Account of the Origins of the Baha'i Faith in Indigenous Communities

Story, among the Quechua and the Aymara of Bolivia, keeps history alive. Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui (1990) writes that unlike the “tragi-comedy of the Absolute Spirit,” story in the old Andean tradition is inspired by the female:

which conceives of history as a woven cloth; it consists in recognizing the warp and weft, the texture, the forms of relationships, in knowing the back from the front, the value and significance of the detailed pattern, and so on (p. 180).

The story of the origin of the Baha'i Faith within the Bolivian indigenous community is a part of the collective memory of the Aymara and Quechua Baha'is, and like the woven cloth, is an integral component of their cosmology. There are no written accounts of this story and, interestingly, it is the men who carry the story, at least it was the men with whom I spoke that retold the story. And, it was a woman, my translator and a granddaughter of an Ancient Walker, who after operating my tape recorder for three months, committed to reveal the story in writing.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Maruja, my Quechua-Spanish translator, is a granddaughter of an “Ancient Walker.” She became very familiar with, and attached to my small cassette tape recorder. After traveling with me to the communities,

The story is important to this study for a number of reasons. First, Bolivia has the seventh highest percentage of Baha'is in its population with approximately 269,000 Baha'is comprising 3.25% of the people. It also has the seventh highest total number of Baha'is of any country. Although I was not able to learn the exact percentage of Quechua, Aymara and other groups who are Baha'is, the number is said to comprise the greater proportion. The growth of the Baha'i Faith in Bolivia among the Aymara and Quechua can be attributed to the efforts of those described in this story. Secondly, many of the participants of the 1989 TMCA project I interviewed were direct descendents of the Ancient Walkers. Thirdly, in Bolivia, the Baha'i Faith is an expression of indigenous self-determination, defines their spiritual reality, and shapes a new identity. This oral account, like their woven cloth, keeps history alive.

This version of the story told here is pieced from interviews that I wove together for the purpose of this study.<sup>6</sup> The original narratives from which this account was adapted can be found in the interviews of Sabino Ortega and Eloy Anelo.

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helping me find the women and men to speak with, and helping me with translations, we developed a deep friendship. I frequently asked her why there was no written history of this account, and encouraged her to tackle the project. I left her with my tape recorder as a gift and she promised me she would begin to record the stories and write "the book." I use this experience in the methodology section on Participatory Action Research.

<sup>6</sup> The story the rest of the Baha'i world knows is that the Baha'i Faith was introduced to Bolivia during a teaching plan entitled, "The Ten Year Crusade" (1953-1963) when the American Baha'i community was given the task of introducing the Baha'i Faith to peoples in nations of Africa and South America. Eleanor Adler, the first "pioneer" in Bolivia met Ivonne Cuellar, a Cochabambina, who was the first to embrace the teachings of this religion. The first Local Spiritual Assembly was established in La Paz in 1945 and the Baha'i Faith received official recognition from the Bolivian government in 1948 when a center in La Paz was established. Between the years 1946 and 1956, the community grew to include members in the cities of Sucre and Cochabamba. In 1956, an Aymara youth named Andrés Jachacollo encountered the Baha'i Center in La Paz and stimulated a massive spiritual movement within the Quechua and Aymara communities throughout the country. Over the years, other Baha'is from Argentina, Peru, the United States and Iran joined this growing community. The Baha'i Faith has become the largest growing movement amongst the indigenous people within Bolivia.

“Remembering and Awakening are Thus One and the Same Thing”<sup>7</sup>

“Long ago, when the Quechua people lived in silence of the truth about what had happened to them, the Ancient Walkers, as they are called by the Quechua and the Aymara Baha’is today, searched on foot throughout the Andean mountains and plains and dreamed about the return of “Weruuchu,” El Señor. One of those people was a Quechua man from Chuquisaca named Melitón Viardo, a seer who had visions and dreams that God would send a new law and justice would be established. He went wandering around in villages and came out telling people the new law of God would be coming and justice would be established. Melitón was persecuted, arrested and beaten for these ideas (Figure 12). Simultaneously, but in the *altiplano* Aymara region, another one of these people was Toribo Miranda, a cacique, (a spiritual leader),<sup>8</sup> who was a seer. He started a spiritual Messianic movement and told people that God was going to bring His law, He was going to establish justice and the people didn’t any longer have to follow the laws of the Spaniards. He said that the Indians didn’t have to give away their land titles because it wasn’t the Spaniard’s land, and the Indians didn’t have to send their children to schools because the schools would teach them Spanish and they would lose their language. He also was persecuted for these ideas and went into hiding. His right-hand man was Andrés Jachacollo, a very eloquent speaker who knew how to speak in Quechua, Aymara and Spanish. Andrés went walking throughout the hills to find this truth and his journey led him to a woman who came from far away and across the ocean.

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<sup>7</sup> Cusicanqui (1990) describes the writing of oral history as “open(ing) the dream to the vigilance of the present, giving verbal expression to that still unconscious knowledge sleeping in the twilight of exclusion and aphasia” (p. 180).

<sup>8</sup> Torino Miranda also appears in Silvia Cusicanqui’s (1990) essay “Indigenous Women and Community Resistance: History and Memory” (p. 174) in *Women and Social Change in Latin America*, Elizabeth Jelin, editor.

She told Andrés about Baha'u'llah, the One from the East who came to right the wrongs of injustice and to unite the peoples of the world. He came back to Torinio who also recognized Baha'u'llah independently, but he died very soon there after and never made any public declaration. But, Andrés kept teaching. He taught his whole family, the people in his village, and all the Indian people in all the five departments in Bolivia. Many, many of the people, Aymara and Quechua, became followers of Baha'u'llah.

But, there was a problem. These indigenous Baha'is didn't want to follow the law of the land because the white people who were in charge, they felt, were not the real keepers of this land. The Indians are the legitimate owners of the land. The Baha'i Faith teaches obedience to the laws of the lands because in the end all will be changed, but these people had seen enough (oppression) that was not fair.

So, at that time, many, many years ago, the National Spiritual Assembly said to leave them (the Quechua and the Aymara) alone and teach others (the non-indigenous, the mestizo and *criollo*). They were left alone. Years later, a man from Ecuador, Raul Pavón, came to Bolivia to help the Baha'is find a location for the site of the radio transmission for Radio Baha'i. A small group of educated Quechua Baha'is from the city and members of the NSA drove all through the *campo* in the old red jeep belonging to the Sucre Baha'i community. They were in Oruro when they left the jeep on the side of a small dirt road to walk a piece of land. Upon their return, there was a large group of Indians crowded all around the jeep. When they came closer to the truck, these Indians greeted them with "Allah-'u'-Abha" (Arabic for "God is Most Glorious" and is a term used as a friendly salutation). They asked the Indians, "How do you know the Baha'i Faith?" The Indians said it was eighteen years before that Andrés Jachacollo had taught



them the truth, and they had been saying prayers since. They had a little prayer book in Aymara and they were waiting all these years for someone to come back to them.

But, these Baha'is, and others in the *campo* were in opposition to the white people and to the National Spiritual Assembly. Raul Pavón said to one of the visitors from the city that these people were better than us, they must be taught and deepened, he said. They've discovered the truth, searched for it themselves, and they have much to teach us. The Indians are very, very special. Others came, too, from all over the Americas and from across the ocean to join.<sup>9</sup> Thousands more people became Baha'is. And, still more even today.

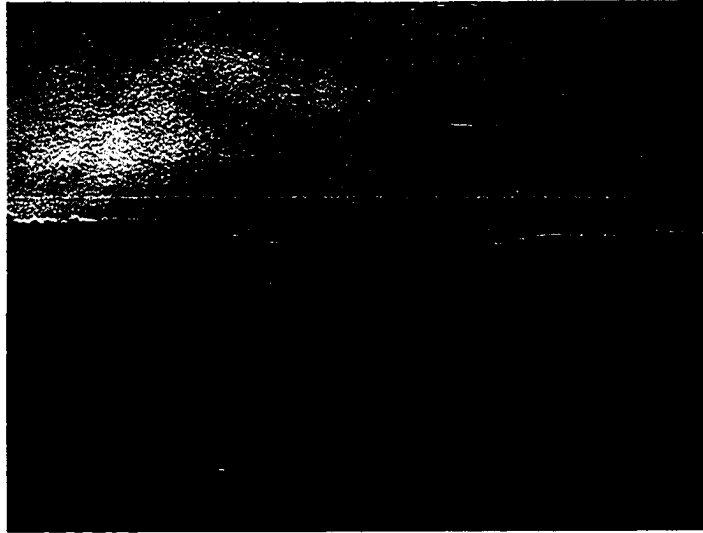
Now, it was when one of the others from Argentina came, Artos Costas, that he and Andrés went to the Chuquisaca region and they found that old Walker named Melitón who hadn't found what he was looking for. After they found him and told him the story of unity and peace, Melitón said to Artos, "Well, you're supposed to return something that is ours. I believe everything you said but you are supposed to return something that is ours." Nobody had understood what he was talking about, but Melitón had a dream in which one of the signs was that they would return something that belonged to his people. Artos didn't know what he was talking about and Andrés didn't know. But as they were leaving this meeting with Melitón, Artos, who had been reading a book on the Incan empire, had this book in his pocket and he decided to give it to Melitón. He said, "Here's a book about the history of the Incan empire, of your people. You can have one of your sons or someone translate it for you." Melitón said to him, "You have completed the promise. You've returned what is ours." From that point, the

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<sup>9</sup> Kevin Locke, a Lakota sacred hoop dancer, and NSA member Jacqueline Left Hand Bull were a few of the North American indigenous contingency to Bolivia.

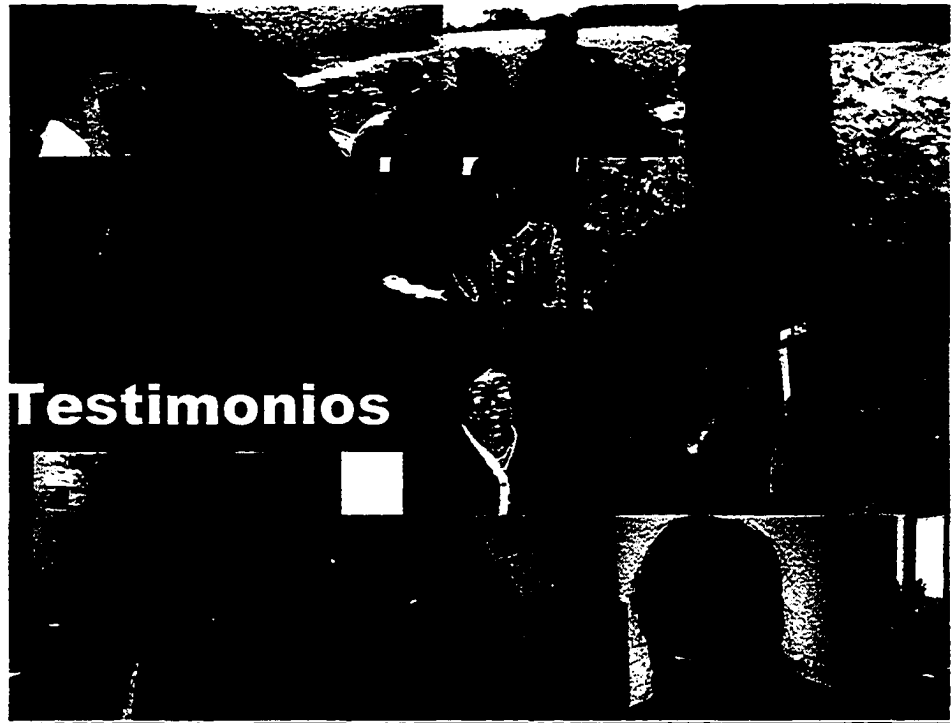
opposition dissipated and he, too, became a Baha'i and began teaching these teachings everywhere throughout Chuquisaca.

Figure 12  
The Hills where the Ancient Walkers Roamed



*Testimonios: Contextualizing Gender and Development*

Figure 13  
*Testimonio*



*Overview of Testimonios*

The heart of this study is the *testimonios* told to me by ten Quechua women and men from four communities where the 1989 TMCA project was implemented. Through these *testimonios*, the women and men with whom I spoke contextualize development at the level of knowledge production—as personal for women, *as* political for men. For both, development is an activity that begins in the home and affects lives and changes community.

The first *testimonio*, a lengthy story told by a young woman named Florencia from Puka Puka, acts as an illustrative case study within this larger case study. Through her life experiences we learn about the knowledge, volition and action of one individual to reinvent herself as an educated and spiritual “maidservant” (Baha’i Writings). Her story reveals new, resistant strategies to modernization by individuals who are members of the Baha’i community. Since “I as researcher” paint the canvas— share co-authorship—her story, in particular, begins with how we met, a strategy I use to contextualize the setting and my relationship to it. As I personalize the research, I, too, begin at home.

Following that, is a story told by Sadia, one of Florencia’s many relations, whose different choices reveal conflict in the goals of GAD and the future viability of sustaining the rural indigenous community in Bolivia. Anamaria, a young woman from Molle Punko, struggles with the increased work burden of juggling school and working as *empleada* (domestic worker) in Sucre. Through Carmela, we learn about different forms of silence, and in her case, of deliberate silence. Her brother, Julio, and Victorio P., the elder of Phoqonchi, reveal lasting ill feelings of “deception, trickery and lies” from implementation. Alone, and without the men, the “silent” women of Phoqonchi soulfully speak about improving life for their children. Jacinta, and her daughter Maruja, descendents of the Ancient Walkers in Angostura, illustrate the spiritual and physical reciprocity of mother and daughter. Jania, an elder woman from Angostura, talks about feeling of abandonment once the project funding ended. The local project coordinator, Olga Banks, also gives *testimonio* about her growth and development since the 1989 TMCA implementation. In her life we see the successful *mestizaje* process, the

production of the “Bolivian subject.” Finally, Eugenio demonstrates how men can also participate in knowledge production about GAD.

Florencia: *La Primera en Salir y La Primera en Regresar?* (The First to Leave, the First to Return?)

Florencia, a young 23-year-old Quechua woman from the remote, rural Chuquisaca village of Puka Puka, was only 13 at the time of the 1989 TMCA project. In the years following the project, Florencia stimulated an exodus of other young women from Puka Puka. She was one of the few girls in her community to achieve a 6<sup>th</sup> grade education, the first girl ever to leave to attend a *colegio* (secondary school), and the first to ever attend a university. Rarely, does a *cholita* who successfully passed the *mestizaje* transformation—the cornerstone of modernity—return to the rural regions once she’s tasted the city, especially to give back to her community.

Recognizing the Smile. Two days before I arrived in Sucre, the city I used as my base for field research, LAB Airlines rerouted my airplane. I made new arrangements through the “Baha’i network” to stay in Cochabamba for one week before I made the 12 hour mountainous trek across the Eastern Cordillera Andean range to Sucre. On the second day in Cochabamba, my son was invited to a Baha’i youth dance rehearsal for the Naw-Ruz (the New Year) celebration<sup>10</sup> in the home of a Baha’i in a newly developed suburban area of the city. Late in the day and dizzy from the altitude, we followed vague directions that were sketched on the back of an envelope and found our way through a grid of freshly paved streets and avenues that intersect along the steep slopes of the

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<sup>10</sup> The Baha’i year is divided into nineteen months of nineteen days. The new year begins on the Spring Equinox, March 20, and marks the completion of the 19 Day Fast. Throughout the world the event is celebrated with food, dance, music and festivities.

Cordillera mountain range. We knocked on the heavy, outer door of a newly constructed, gated Spanish-style stucco home. Florencia opened the door.

I initially recognized Florencia, not by her traditional Tarabuco heavy black woven draped *manta* (shawl) and embroidered woolen skirt, nor by her long, thick braids, or the *pollera* (the skirt adopted by Quechua and Aymara young girls in urban centers) worn by *cholitas* (young, urban, indigenous girls). I recognized Florencia by her smile. And, it was not actually her smile I knew from viewing repeatedly the “Two Wings” video, but rather that of her older sister. Had I missed the smile and the baby corn size teeth, characteristic of her particular region, or had Bolivia’s newly privatized airlines not rerouted my flight, I would not have found this extraordinary first thread to my interview subjects. Ten years later, Florencia, with shorter hair, wore jeans, a sweatshirt, and make-up.

Fashion, Identity and New Study Questions. In Bolivia, it is the women, not the men, whose bodies are visibly marked for racial and cultural difference. The Aymara and Quechua women and young girls—called the pejorative *chola* or *cholita*—wear their ethnicity and class when they move to urban centers to work as domestic employees of the middle or upper classes or as street vendors. Each group was originally assigned a particular *pollera*, *manta*, y *sombrero*, (the skirt, the shawl and the hat) and even jewelry, by the Spaniards as a visible emblem of indigenous ethnicity stamped on the woman’s body (Stephenson, 1999). After independence in 1952 when the Indians were freed from serfdom, clothing (worn by women) became a marker for resistance to nationalism and modernity:

(they, the indigenous) refused to be domesticated by hegemonic discourses. The *pollera* remains a resonant trope that ties together the

gendered and racialized practices of resistance in La Paz throughout the twentieth century (Stephenson, 1999, p. 155).

Florencia, I learned, adopted the *pollera* after her traditional village attire as her ticket into the city, and then abandoned the skirt in *colegio* (secondary school). She also cut her long, thick, waist length braids to her mid-back where she wears it loose or sometimes clipped up. Contrary to indigenous custom, she wore pinkish, peeling nail polish and two earrings in each ear. Her sweatshirt, from a mid-western American university, was oversized and hung over blue jeans. On the outside, Florencia looked like any other Bolivian who successfully completed the *mestizaje* process, an ideological racial and economic blending invented to eradicate the polarization between the white and Indian nation (Stephenson, 1999).

New Questions. While my son mingled with other Baha'i youth his own age and an amiable Florencia served coke and crackers, I wondered. What does it mean that Florencia, clad in her pre-Colombian Indian attire only ten years earlier and redressed as the urban cholita for five years, was now reproduced in the image of a “modern” Western university student? Was she wearing the identity of Bolivia’s “new theology”—neoliberalism—as resistance to Western hegemony, or to reproduce “the modern woman?” How does environment influence identity, does identity change with a new wardrobe and does dress erase indigenous-ness? Is this change in response to the 1989 TMCA project, and if so, is it considered a success or failure? What does it mean for the community and its sustainability when indigenous women change their dress? I entered fieldwork in Bolivia with one set of study questions, but before I even unpacked my bags, I had reformulated a second set. If “development is personal” and “begins at home;” had I uncovered in the transformation of Florencia vis-à-vis her clothing a double

bind for gender and development? In Florencia I realized that before I could answer this study's questions, I would have to confront these newly revealed questions first.

"It's in the Hills that God Hears us Best"<sup>11</sup> In the rolling foothills of the *altiplano* village of Puka Puka, where Florencia grew up, young girls share childcare responsibilities with their mothers, many of whom are still having babies, tend sheep, collect firewood, and cut vegetables. Like most girls, Florencia, in the middle of 7 sisters and brothers, washed clothes, cut vegetables, and grazed the sheep in green patches of the eroded dusty red hills. But, unlike her siblings who didn't question tradition, she was attracted to a different path. "I was different from them," she said.

Primarily, most rural Quechua girls don't complete the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade minimal educational requirement, partly due of lack of resources, but mostly to help their mothers with household responsibilities. Secondly, these girls are mothers at an early age, married or not, and in this region, most commonly become weavers of renowned tapestries that bring an income from the Sunday market in Tarabuco. Florencia was resistant to her village's cultural ways and cultivated an interest in education, which made problems for the family:

As long as I can remember, my sisters and brothers liked the culture, I didn't. I don't know. What I think the reason could be that I wasn't cared for as the others were or it could be is that I wasn't attracted to the culture they way my sister was. My sister wasn't interested in studying like I was. She liked to sit and knit the crafts the family did (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

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<sup>11</sup> Although there are many references in this study to the hills and spirituality, I borrow this phrase from an oral history *testimonio* compiled by Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui (1990) in her essay "Indigenous Women and Community Resistance: History and Memory" in *Women and Social Change in Latin America*, Elizabeth Jelin, editor.



When I was four, they put me in school. I was a bright girl. I was active and liked to play and got involved in things. My father didn't like that, he thought I was lazy. The teacher said I was bright and that I should continue to study. That's one reason I think that I'm different from them. The other children were too small and my brothers were older (for school). Nobody else (in my family) had the same problem as I had (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

Florencia presented as a difficult child to her father, a man, who at that time, drank alcohol and abused her mother. Perceiving her interest in education as avoidance of work obligations, a distinction internalized from colonial class divisions, he committed to sell Florencia to a "rich woman in town" for 100 cows and arranged a temporary enslavement until she was older. She used the resources from the arrangement to support her mother, a victim of marital abuse:

*Entonces* (then) my parents were Catholic and used to get drunk and fight between themselves and my father used to throw me out of my house. My father would always have these festivals in the house, particularly around Carnival time. He would come home after he had been drinking and he would hit my mother. I was seven years old and I would sleep with my mother. I would keep sticks in the bed so that he wouldn't hit my mother. He would say to me that I wasn't his daughter because I protected my mother and I didn't defend my father. He'd tell me I wasn't his daughter.

One time, ...my father came back and he was with a group of people and he kept on drinking and drinking. Finally, when he came into the room, he started hitting my mother first and then me also. My mother ended up with a cut on her face and she almost died. She was really upset because none of the other children but me helped to defend her.

...After this happened, my mother went to the hospital and told everyone she had fallen. She really loved my father and didn't want to separate because the children were still so small and she didn't know how to survive.

There was a rich woman who offered to buy me for 100 cows. I wasn't sold right away, but I went to live with this woman as an *empleada* (domestic worker) in Tarabuco when I was 7 years old. So, at that time I decided to work really hard to help take care of my mother. I went back to this place and I worked as hard as I could to earn money. I was only 7 or 8 years old at that time. I earned 20 *pesos* a month and I gave all that to

my mother, I didn't have any for myself. So, I kept on working and the years passed (Florescia, 2000, personal communication).

The narrative reveals not only a common family system where domestic violence is combined with alcohol use, but also portrays a family life under the colonial rule of the Catholic Church.<sup>12</sup> Even though the Indian population was freed from serfdom after the 1952 Revolution, notions of indentured servitude, like racism, lingered long after legislative equality. The testimonial also reveals more about the tension between Florescia and her father and her role as an ally to her mother. Although separately and independently from Florescia, her father eventually left the church, and like so many men in Puka Puka "who stopped drinking," became a member of the Baha'i community. The women "then also became interested and led a more united family effort." But, before that, and while her interest in education grew:

More years passed and they still hadn't made the agreement for me to be bought. Later, when I was 13 years old, well my father didn't want to pay for school, nothing, he would throw me out of the house at 2:00 in the morning many times, he was a drunk. I would run away into the mountains. One time when this happened, I decided I couldn't take it any more. Finally, the day before I was supposed to be sold, my father was going to get 100 cattle for me to become the daughter of this woman. I talked to my Uncle Octavio and he was going to go to Sucre for a Baha'i conference. He told me he was a Baha'i and I told him I wanted to go with him. That day, I escaped. The next day was supposed to be the arrangement for the cattle (Florescia, 2000, personal communication).

That day, Florescia was in the hills with Ximena, her sister-in-law, to tend the sheep. Ximena helped Florescia plan her "escape." Ximena remembered:

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<sup>12</sup> Research conducted between the years 1994-1997 by *Servicios Legales Integrales* indicates that the nine departments in Bolivia submitted a total of 25,875 cases of domestic violence (Mehrotra, Aparna (2001)).

Florencia and I were up on the mountains (with the sheep). Florencia said to me ‘why do we stay here? We don’t know anything.’ She said, “Why don’t we go to Sucre to the *cursillo*?” We wanted to go to the *cursillo* but her parents didn’t want her to go, no one wanted us to go. I insisted that she go. I took her there. We went together (J Pachacopa, 2000, personal communication).

The seeds for Florencia’s spirituality and new life were sewn:

“It was in the mountains that I heard about the Baha’i Faith from my uncle Octavio. He told me he was going to a congress (conference) in Sucre. He wasn’t a Baha’i then. I told my uncle I was going to run away and I wasn’t going to stay here (Adente, 2000, personal communication).

My uncle said I needed ask my father if he could come with me because he knew the next day was the trade. So, I went to my father and of course, he said no, and of course, said no money. My mother cried and I cried. I finally decided to go back to my uncle and I lied to him. I told him my father said it was o.k. to go but he didn’t give me any money. I asked if I could borrow three *pesos* that I needed to make the trip to Sucre from my uncle and that I would pay him back. He agreed and I would pay him back (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

But, more than travel is involved for an indigenous girl child to leave the village; urban migration requires that the Indian female reinvent herself as a *cholita*, encoded by the skirt. After the 1952 revolution, and in the *pollera*, social identity as Indian is hidden because the indigenous girl child becomes a working urban campesino (Lagos, 1994) who contributes to the state. Ximena “midwifed” Florencia’s new class identity, which led to the discovery of a new religion by giving her:

a shirt (*manta*) and a blouse (*pollera*). I went to the conference and met Dr. Oladi (secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly). He helped me sign my card as a Baha’i without knowing very much. I knew very little about the Faith, they gave me a prayer book and I started teaching (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> In post-colonial Bolivia and its current economic conditions for indigenous people, it is not uncommon for new religions to entice individuals through gifts and promises, nor is it uncommon for individuals to accept the offerings. During this research period, the Catholic Church continued to drop in numbers due to the conversion efforts of the Evangelical Churches, including the Church of the Latter Day Saints. This theme reifies colonial practices where conversions subtracted from indigenous culture. Virginia’s

Soon after Florencia's "declaration and enrollment"<sup>14</sup> as a member of the Baha'i Faith, she participated in the 1989 TMCA project. She remembers:<sup>15</sup>

... we went to a festival, a Baha'i festival first with my sister and my aunt when she was a new Baha'i. After that, there was three days of talks. They talked about women and other subjects. But one of them I remember, the one about women.<sup>16</sup>

Before this time, nothing had ever been said about women participating in the *Sindicato* or any other activity together. After this festival there was three days that focused on women's participation. There were groups of four and we talked about what we could do as women (to improve).

My memory of the project is I remember we participated in seminars with others who were not Baha'is. At the beginning there were no women participating, but as soon as there were conferences, from that point on women participated. There were no activities in Puka Puka, there were no Baha'is, but later before the idea took hold, it was very different for women. You have no idea how hard it was for me. As more Baha'is

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"declaration" in the Baha'i Faith with little knowledge of the teachings might not be unusual within this context, however, the following events reveal additive properties to the indigenous communities.

<sup>14</sup> The distinction in the Baha'i Faith between declaration and enrollment is organizational. A "declaration" is a spiritual acknowledgement of belief and an "enrollment" is administrative which requires a signature on a card.

<sup>15</sup> Puka Puka was selected for the third implementation site once the NSA agreed to expand to other communities beyond the Phoqonchi and Angostura implementation in the north. Section....in Chapter 1 explains how the 1989 TMCA project design requested a cluster of diverse communities for implementation, however, the NSA of Bolivia agreed to offer one. Eventually, the project coordinators convinced the NSA to include other communities. Due to the rapid growth of the Baha'is in this community, their steadfastness, and interest in rural education, the Puka Puka was selected.

<sup>16</sup> The festival Virginia mentions in the passage refers to the gatherings the project coordinators organized in Sucre and Phoqonchi. The talks are the workshops. As I discuss elsewhere, the understanding of the conceptual design of the 1989 TMCA project by the local project coordinators from the perspective of development was not clear from the beginning and is indicative of implementation failure, according to many players at the institutional level and my analysis. I avoid discussion of project implementation in this section in order to maintain the focus on this testimonio. It is important to mention that the 'festivals' were not necessarily meant to be festivals, or *fiestas* as such, rather the project design called for a culminating performance, or presentation of project results, of the role plays and socio-dramas of the communication/consultation process with regards to women's role and gender attitudes and behaviors. Original video documentation from the Puka Puka implementation confirms the 'talks,' which again were not meant to be actual talks, rather a community participatory process.

came, little by little, the idea was, it was expected for women to participate (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

The festivals and talks refer to the activities of the 1989 TMCA project. As a 13-year-old girl, the theme of women's participation stood out in her mind above all other activities aimed to improve women's status and change gender attitudes and behaviors. Not only did the values of the 1989 TMCA project encourage the participation of women in decision-making, so did the practices in the Baha'i community. Immediately after "becoming a Baha'i" and the participating in the activities of the 1989 TMCA project, Florencia left the Puka Puka community to engage in the national Baha'i teaching activities where she was the first young female to travel alone in the *campo*.

I heard about people teaching and I made a commitment to be a travel teacher for 3 years. At that point there were no women travel teachers, I was the only one, later there were others. We used to travel all the time, come back to the Institute (Sucre) and then go off again (Adente, 2000, personal communication).

We went together and I never returned to my house for three years. I was with my uncle and we went walking. When I was 13, I became a Baha'i (when I knew little) and I became a *maestro viajero* (travel teacher).

I really became involved in studying the Baha'i Faith. I was the only female who was teaching the Faith in the group of Baha'i teachers (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

She stopped "walking" after three years and moved into the Baha'i *Sede* (Center) in Sucre where she deepened further in the teachings of the Baha'i Faith. After two and a half more years, she returned to her home in Puka Puka where she learned of her father's spiritual transformation, a process she would come to nurture:

(When I returned) my father asked me where I had been and what I had been doing. I told him I had become a Baha'i and I took off my pack and showed him all the papers I had. He said to me that he had become a Baha'i too. He had become a Baha'i through someone else, but he wasn't that deepened and didn't know that much. He learned more through me.

He was invited to come to a conference here in Cochabamba. He was in the middle of harvesting and he said he couldn't go. My sister and I decided we would work as field workers to allow my father to come. When he returned he said to us that we had found the right path and that was the beginning of the changes in our family (Floencia, 2000, personal communication).<sup>17</sup>

Sex and the Skirt: *Mestizaje* as Final Act of Becoming "Modern?". Floencia moved to Cochabamba, another urban city, where she lived with a Baha'i family<sup>18</sup> and she enrolled in a *colegio* and eventually graduated from secondary school. It was at this time that I met Floencia in Cochabamba at that Baha'i youth gathering during her first semester in the university where she was working for another Baha'i family for her room and board. At first glance, it appeared to me that the influence of the 1989 TMCA project and the Baha'i Faith succeeded to create a racially and culturally homogenous Bolivian.

Cultural discrimination for indigenous people in Bolivian schooling is pervasive.

In a recent ethnography on Bolivian schooling, an Aymara student said:

...they treat us, not like people, but like animals....They yell at us whenever they feel like it. If we express our opinion, many of them think we're out of line. If we complain about something, they think we're calling them thieves, that it's unfair. I'm not saying all the professors, but that's the reality...The students don't have any right to say anything. We say we live in a democracy, but as I see it we don't...(Luyknx, 1999).

A 27-year-old Quechua woman presently completing her last year in *colegio* (the equivalent of 8<sup>th</sup> grade) and interviewed for this study said:

Some of the professors don't think we know how to speak well, they think we don't know how to read (Anamaria, personal communication, 2000).

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<sup>17</sup> The changes Virginia refers to in her family and in her community are crucial to this study but in order to focus specifically on Virginia, these *testimonios* are explored elsewhere in this chapter.

<sup>18</sup> Virginia lived with Giesla Zonneveld and their family where she exchanged household responsibilities for room and board and attended school in the evenings.

Based on the experience of the Quechua and Aymara students and literature I read on schooling and cultural production in Bolivia (Luykx, 1999), I asked Florencia how a change her in environment and educational experiences influenced her decision to change her clothing and about its influence on her identity construction. Speaking in fluent Spanish, dressed in the “modern” uniform and drinking Coca-Cola, She said:

This has not been easy, not without a lot of tests. I’ve cried and gone through all kinds of problems.

I think there is some discrimination (in the schools). In the school I went to the girls wore their skirts and I think they were helped more by their teachers. I feel, that in my case, I was being bothered by other people (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

Florencia explained that “being bothered by other people” meant that she was sexually harassed by men in the street. To help me better understand “sex and the skirt” in Bolivia, I learned from a non-indigenous interview subject that:

What the skirt means here is: “I am stupid, ignorant, and available for sex.” That’s what it means when you wear it. It means that she is going to be appreciated for sex (H. Banks, 2000, personal communication).

Unprompted, Florencia spoke in length, and with emotion, about this experience, but asked that the tape recorder be turned off. But, before that she said:

Since 1994, 1995 I was wearing it (the *pollera*) when I came here (to Cochabamba). One day, when I was coming back from a meeting I was being harassed by workers on my way home and I didn’t have money for the bus. I prayed a lot and I started thinking seriously asked myself “What am I going to do with my life?” I decided I was going to put on pants and start studying and become part of the city. And I did that. I haven’t worn my skirt since then (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

For Florencia, the abandonment of the *pollera*, the braids and other identity markers expressed resistance not only to the impositions of an oppressive colonial society

(Jelin, 1990) and modernity, but to the specific gendered impositions of the patriarchal society. Under Western dress, lies the Indian tradition of resistance.

Dress as Resistance. Throughout Latin America, and particularly in Bolivia, the ideologies of *mestizaje*, or mestization, operate through the official doctrines and discourses of the state. These values are promoted to mitigate the racial and economic split between the white and Indian nation in order “to advocate instead a third, mestizo nation” (Stephenson, 1999, p. 35). Clothing, language, hygiene and the home are sites for “constructing modern bodies and modern spaces” (Stephenson, 1999), in other words, for the reproduction of Western values. Regardless of whether Florencia’s new social markers were an act of resistance against discrimination in Bolivia’s schools, for protection from sexual harassment, or to become ‘modern,’ on the outside, her appearance conveyed successful mestization. But, from Florencia’s point of view, however, the change did not influence her ethnic or spiritual identity:

I feel the same, as a person, I feel the same. The important thing is my capacity daily to transform more. My dress doesn’t make me indigenous. I could go to the university wearing my skirt, but because I haven’t worn it in so long, I wouldn’t feel very comfortable (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

In Florencia, I began to see the tensions within the hegemonic discourse that juxtapose the effects of the “modern” on the “traditional.” On one hand, Florencia confronted the assaults of a patriarchal and racist society by changing her clothing to receive a better education. On the other hand, on the outside, she absorbed the images that commodify and homogenize indigenous identities for a unified Bolivian citizenship, but on the inside, she truly resisted those changes. To help me better understand these contradictions, I asked another educated Quechua Baha’i woman who lived in Florencia’s



new urban community and who also fit the mestization category, about dress and becoming 'modern.' Cristina supported Florencia's position:

People here can dress native or as non-native and I think they do it according to what benefits it will give them. One must not be blind and to think there isn't discrimination. Some circles will not accept you with native dress. So, people decide: I will dress like this for one occasion and I will dress like that for another.

Selling out? Don't city people do the same thing? Don't they wear a tuxedo, Nikes, Patagonia, isn't that their ticket to the circle? Why can't native people do the same? Because we have these mental models that we have to wear symbols and maybe traditional clothing is a symbol.

I don't need a particular kind of skirt to define that in me (Cristina, 2000, personal communication).

I realized Florencia's behavior is consistent with the long-standing tradition of indigenous people's resistance to dominant ideologies, to "negotiate the terms of modernity, but always as 'Indians'" (Stephenson, 1999). While it appeared that Florencia had completed the final stage of mestization on modern terms, Florencia reappropriated Western dress for her own self-determination. As Stephenson points out, the Bolivian indigenous woman

...undergoes a dual transition as she learns to cope with a new lifestyle. She must negotiate, recontextualize and even expand native Andean cultural traditions at the same time as she confronts western forms of modernity (Marcia Stephenson, "Gender and Modernity in Andean Bolivia," 1999).

An analysis of Florencia's lived experiences vis-à-vis her *testimonio* and her appearance had provided me with a context from within which I could better understand the influences of a GAD project in Bolivia from the point of view of the people for whom the project aims to benefit. However, as I proceeded to explore my study questions and

to draw connections to the influences of 1989 TMCA project, I encountered additional challenges and contradictions.

The 1989 TMCA Project or the Baha'i Faith? As Florencia talked with me about the 1989 TMCA project and its positive influence on the women and men in Puka Puka, our second translator, a woman who was familiar with the 1989 TMCA implementation and Florencia's life, interjected:

I don't know that there is a distinction between the project and the (activities of the Baha'i) Faith, but she's bringing the Faith in as, the Faith came into Puka Puka very strongly with Sabino and a whole lot of other people. That group of people were giving them courses, so she's contributing this to the Baha'i Faith and not to the project. But, it was her training with the project that led her to doing this in the first place (B. Genge, 2000, personal communication).

Also, the caretaker of the Baha'i *Sede* in Sucre where Florencia first lived after she left Puka Puka, and who was also my driver to the villages, added:

There were two other projects in this community, The Ruhiyyah Khanum Women's Literacy Project followed the UNIFEM project as a response to community identified needs, and *Masuqtar Tarpuyman Tantanakuy*, The New Sowing Reunion, in the mid-1980s preceded the UNIFEM project (S. Ortega, 2000, personal communication).

These two additional passages told by Florencia help to shed light on the confusion between the 1989 TMCA project and the teachings of the Baha'i Faith about the equality of women and men in that the time sequence and activities of the two are muddled. Also, both passages reflect an increase in Baha'i activity, a goal perhaps of the Baha'i community but not specifically of the UNIFEM funded 1989 TMCA project:

In the beginning, after this project, the people from Phoqonchi didn't come to our community, I didn't have any more contact with that group. But because I had been there, and with some other people, there were four girls who were *maestro viajeros*, travel teachers, and we went back to our own community in Puka Puka and started teaching about the Baha'i Faith,

but with the idea of the equality of the men and women. There is a definite change (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

After this project there was an invitation by the *Sindicato* and they invited all these different religions. A lot of women came from Phoqonchi and they asked us to sing. We sang Baha'i songs, Baha'is were asked to share prayers, and they respected the Baha'is. I think there was a change from that experience. It was called Congreso del Organizacion Sindicato (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

It is clear from Florencia's *testimonio*, and from stories to follow, the boundaries are collapsed between the goals and effects of the 1989 TMCA project, the teachings of the Baha'i Faith, particularly the principle of the equality of women and men, and other Baha'i inspired projects held before and after the 1989 TMCA. The influences and relationships between these three are often talked about interchangeably by many interview subjects, which confound the difficulty of evaluating the 1989 TMCA Gender and Development implementation. Therefore, the following section addresses the changes in general and assumes the entanglement between the initiatives.

Changes: Development as Personal and Begins at Home. After a few years, Florencia returned to the same hills where she once grazed sheep and planned her escape to "pray for my family to be reunited." Soon after, the man who once turned against his daughter because of her educational interests, "really changed." He "begged for forgiveness to me after all (he) has done." Although he

"doesn't read or write, he really believed in education now. Even before, my mother would say 'why study?' My father now says 'study? That's good.'"

Out of a small community of about 100, about 80 women and men had become Baha'is. In consultation on how to "improve the community," the community, under the

jurisdiction of the Local Spiritual Assembly (LSA) of Puka Puka and with technical support from Nur University, built an elementary school where, at the time of this research, her father was chair of the 'school board.' Her mother became more involved in decision-making as a member of the LSA of Puka Puka. The youngest girl, "who is five is really the most intelligent one, can already count to 100!" Her older sister, the girl pictured in my photo album from whom I recognized Florencia's smile and the "more cared" for one by her father and:

never had the same interest in education as I had. She never went to school, she never had an interest. Now, she is learning to read and write in alphabetization and is functioning well in the community. Yes, she is studying, she learned a lot about the Baha'i Faith in the project. Then she was the one in charge of the women, like the president. She presented in many places about the role of women and then she started also a weaving program for women (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

In these next passages, Florencia summarized the same changes noted in all the 1989 TMCA implementations sites: decreases in the alcohol consumption of the men in the community and changes in the women who went to bars, identified a decrease in domestic violence, an increase in participation and consultation, and reported a shift in labor patterns:

...the women who used to like dancing in the bars, now don't go to the bars anymore. Before, they only stayed in the house, didn't want to go out, if there were congresses (conferences, meetings) they didn't want to go, many women don't want to go anywhere, they are afraid, mostly they stay home. Before, they would hit their children. They are now more respectful of their children and they are more respectful of themselves (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

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Now the community is so beautiful. They don't drink anymore, they don't fight anymore. Now they work in the fields together (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

You see now men helping the women with the children. They are in the kitchen peeling potatoes. In the past there was only day out of the year that the women cooked. But now, they are helping on a regular basis (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

Since the Baha'i Faith entered in Puka Puka there has been more consultation. But since two years ago, there was a course on Dr. Baker's lot on early education for children and they really stressed the idea of family consultation and participation in early education. Since then, there has been even more consultation within families (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

*El Futuro Desconocido (The Unknown Future) and a Community Resists.*

Although she, her family and the community "have transformed," in the past ten years from both the influence of the Baha'i Faith and the 1989 TMCA project, when I met Florencia, she was unsure if she'd return. As one interview subject, who serves as president of Nur University, said:

...that trend of migration to the urban will always provoke changes, cultural changes in people. They dress, you know in terms of employment, in terms of living environment... they become part of an economy where they have to make a salary where they got paid once a year in the village with harvest. It's a whole transition for them, and in that process, many of the youth coming from the rural areas go through a state of autonomy where they lose their traditional values and they don't replace them with anything. They (the young Quechua girls) become very vulnerable to all the dangers of urban society, prostitution, violence, and drug abuse. They become very vulnerable to those types of things (E. Anelo, 2000, personal communication).

Florencia is an energetic, attractive and charismatic individual. By appearances alone, it is be difficult to imagine Florencia's return to the dusty, isolated village of Puka Puka where the women plant and harvest potatoes and weave blankets for a cash income. However, I learned from her sister-in-law that the Baha'i community is resisting urban migration and the depletion of the rural areas by asking the existing women to make a promise to give back to the

community. Also, the community has plans to expand the school they founded each year until they establish a university. Ximena said:

The community thinks she is going to return because the Local Spiritual Assembly always says that when a member of the Baha'i community leaves they should go to study and they should return to their community to teach what they learn. They say the girls are studying for their community, to serve their community. Of course, it will depend on Florencia (Ximena, 2000, personal communication).

When she graduated from the secondary school, her family and community believed that was enough and hoped Florencia would return:

They cried. They thought that I could work with this degree. They think it is sufficient to go back and work. Now, they have called me here twice, and asked me to come back. But, I feel like I need to have more education. I need this year to get myself ready to go to the university. I really want to get a university degree. I really want all my brothers and sisters to get a degree. I feel like it will have much more effect on my community and on my life if I can continue to study and get to the point where I want to be before I go back (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

During this research period, Florencia couldn't "say exactly what I desire—it's difficult." She continued:

Well, my plan is to study and stay firm and if God is willing, to get a good future and a good condition. I can't say how. We (my uncle and I) would like to see a university there, a place where all the relatives and people are studying. Where they are learning and studying. I would like the community to be better. We will see. Good things. I'd like to see students studying and who want to work there (Florencia, 2000, personal communication).

Ximena expressed her uncertainty:

Maybe she will return or maybe she will find work somewhere else and she won't return (Ximena, 2000, personal communication).

*Y Los de Mas (And, the Others)*

To help me learn if changes in Florencia's life were exceptional, and more about the perceptions of the 1989 TMCA project, I talked to other young women who were girls ten years ago at the time of the project. Like Florencia, each woman told a particular story which revealed different aspects of how the project and the teachings of the Baha'i Faith influenced their lives and their communities. In the interview with Sadai, another woman from Puka Puka, little was mentioned of the 1989 TMCA project, however, she did give a *testimonio* about important development concerns about the role of education and its relationship to sustaining community and culture. Sadai traveled a different path than did Florencia. Her *testimonio* creates the tension against which Florencia's life choices propelled a community to increase its environment's ability to meet future needs of its members.

Sadai: "God Wants that the Children Don't Stay in the City"

Like Florencia, Sadai participated in the project as a young girl with the others, but unlike Florencia, she never left the village afterwards, even when she became a member of the Baha'i community. She was young when she married Octavio, the *amauta* of Puka Puka (an elected spiritual leader) and the uncle Florencia referred to in her story who brought her to the *cursillo* in Sucre.<sup>19</sup> She is now the mother of four children between the ages of 1 to 10. Sadai does not wear the *pollera* worn by the urban Quechua, instead she wears the indigenous clothing of the region, a black wool skirt with brightly colored flowers embroidered around the trim and a length of black wool fabric folded in

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<sup>19</sup> An *amauta* is the elected leader of the rural indigenous community whose responsibilities include supporting local development initiatives that focus on agricultural production, environmental conservation, education and community empowerment.

front and back. A black knitted cap over her thick, black braids replaced the traditional sequined pillbox hat worn by the women in that region. Sadai speaks little Spanish and when I mentioned to her that I needed to improve my Spanish, she said, "I would also like to do that, learn Spanish well."

In addition to her daily responsibilities, which include childcare, food preparation, cooking, and watching the animals, Sadai is responsible for managing a productive potato farm.<sup>20</sup> I visited with Sadai during the potato harvesting season while she was organizing the harvest for her community and the distribution of surplus for the local market. She didn't have time to answer the many of the questions I had about her life or the project.<sup>21</sup> Instead of asking what I thought was important, I listened to what she wanted me to know.

Shortly after the 1989 TMCA project, a literacy project for women was established in Puka Puka. Sadai remembers:

I used to go every Saturday for one full day. Now, those who had the meeting, there's not a place for us to go. Before we had homework all the time and we had to study underneath the lamp (a gas torch, like a Coleman

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<sup>20</sup> A typical day in Sadai's life begins with rising early in the morning to prepare the morning meal, which generally consists of boiled potatoes, aji, a puree of red pepper, garlic and cumin, and a potato and grain soup for her family. After caring for the children, and depending upon the season, she will work in the fields and gather firewood for fuel. Mid-day, she returns home to prepare the afternoon meal, will care for the children, and after eating, will return to the field, this time to tend the sheep or gather more firewood. While watching the animals, she will spin yarn, and on occasion, will weave with the other women. The young children are with her throughout her chores, the older children attend the community school. In this community, the children are able to achieve a 6<sup>th</sup> grade education.

<sup>21</sup> For example, I wanted to know more about the dwelling in which Sadai and her family lived which was different from the other homes in that instead of the usual brown adobe interior, her home was painted white. Most indigenous dwellings in the countryside do not have interior furnishings, but in Sadai's home, there are wooden shelves for books, many of which were in Spanish as well as Quechua." Also, in the open courtyard that adjoins the three other adobe rooms is a hand pump for water, the only indoor plumbing I saw. These differences could have been attributed to her husband's status in the community or to their increased income from potatoes. I also wanted to know more about the work schedule chart that hung on the wall in the central room to specify which family member was responsible for daily chores.



camping lantern). Now, I have to make the food and I'm not able to go (Sadai, 2000, personal communication).

But, according to Bolivian educational standards, Sadai was considered literate with her third-grade education, the minimum Bolivian requirement for rural, indigenous people. Whereas, for Florencia, education meant fulfilling a passion and developing a skill for which she has talent before providing service to others, education for Sadai was for the betterment and liberation of the community:

Education is very important to me for this reason: We as mothers are more interested in our children therefore we are going to force ourselves more and more now so that they do not work the land, so that they have a profession and that they don't have to work on the land suffering as we have to. We want our children to rise above where we are now (Sadai, 2000, personal communication)..

Although Sadai wanted "more education" for herself and her children, she was not willing to abandon the community. More exactly, Sadai is deeply concerned about the sustainability of her culture and the longevity of the community; she rejected and feared the notion of urban migration to the cities:

I would like, in the first place, God wants that the children don't stay in the city. In the second place, always I would like that they come back and remain in the village to help the community rise above (its current condition). I would like them to remain in the same community so that they finish their education here. In this way they help others. I would like that we had some work here to bring young people back into the community. If there were work here they wouldn't have to go to the city. I know they are suffering here, but if they could do some work in their own community here so that they wouldn't have to go to the city (Sadai, 2000, personal communication).

I encourage the reader to keep in mind the environmental ecosystem of Puka Puka when reading the following passage. Briefly, like its name in Quechua suggests, Puka Puka is "red rock," named after the eroded, dusty, and rocky desert-like dirt. With the

exception of the green farms along the river-bed which fills only in the rainy season, Puka Puka is void of topsoil; and like the other communities in this study, there is no potable water, sanitation or electricity. As a semi-nuclear community, the nearest village is about 10 miles away. The only way in is by foot or in the back of a truck for about 15 *Bolivianos* (under \$4.00). There is one school and no electricity. Additionally, the nutritional health of the children in their school is cause for concern; no protein, including eggs, are consumed by this community and the children suffer from a number of health problems, including fragile bones and brittle teeth. The ability to sustain the community and its culture depends upon the stability of the future generation.

Sadai believes it is the responsibility of the present generation, particularly the mothers, to educate themselves and to plan for the community's development:

I would like to see jobs with specific skills, like mechanics, carpentry, seamstresses, engineering, teachers, jobs like this. By this way they (the youth) can stay here. I would like that they stay here, that they learn their professions here so that in that way you are part of a community. There are teachers who come in and who can't teach about our reality and they leave. We need people who live and learn here and then teach here so that everyone is living within their reality, within the reality of our same community. So, the people who are from here come from here (rise from, sprout from) so we pass through all generations (Sadai, 2000, personal communication).

Although Sadai is an attractive and self-determined woman, she spoke to me with tears in her eyes as she talked about wanting more for her children than she had for herself:

I want my children to be good, that they are educated, that they have a profession. I don't want them to end up like I am. I don't want them to be like me (Sadai, 2000, personal communication).

Sadai addressed another common theme expressed by many families regardless of race, class and ethnicity, but one that takes on new meaning when placed in the context of sustaining culture and rural community. How modernity interferes with the birth, life, and death cycle, lived generally as a continuous circle within indigenous communities, must be renegotiated within the context of urban migration:

And, may God grant that we are not separated, my children and I. I always want to live with them, I don't want to be abandoned, that we are always together (Sadai, 2000, personal communication).

Anamaria: *Su Trabaja es Ajeno* (Her Work is for Others)<sup>22</sup>

Anamaria is a 21 year old Quechua woman from the small, rural village of Molle Punko, about 50 miles from Sucre. She was 12 years old at the time of the project implementation. The village was invited to attend activities in Tallawanka, the second community the 1989 TMCA project spread to after Phoqonchi. Molle Punko is a semi-nuclear community named after the indigenous Andean Molle tree, however there are no Molles left in the village, only the imported Eucalyptus stand. Her mother, now in her late 60s, and her older sister were involved as participants; Anamaria, with “about 3 or 4 other girls, watched.”

Anamaria wears the traditional urban *pollera* with the typical pastel hand knitted cardigan sweaters sold in *mercado campesino* (literally, farmer's market but refers to the Indian market), flesh tone heavy stockings and sandals. She keeps her thick, long black hair parted in the middle and braided. Outside the house, she wears the wide brimmed cowboy-style hat typical of the Quechua in the immediate surrounding area of Sucre.

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<sup>22</sup> This phrase does not come from the interview narrative but are the lyrics of a song by Susanna Vaca on the CD entitled, “Sounds of Black Peru.”

Ten years ago, when “Olga Banks came to my village” to implement the activities of the 1989 TMCA project, Anamaria watched “dramas,” role-plays, about the work patterns of women and men. She “enjoyed” watching, but felt “bad” when she saw:

(that) the women didn’t cook fast enough and didn’t get the meal ready on time and the men would get angry. After the theater, after the husband was angry at the wife after she didn’t cook the meal fast enough, there would be some Baha’i brothers and sisters that would interrupt and would talk to him and explain to him about women’s rights and that he shouldn’t get so upset with his wife because she was still cooking and then would give him some candy to calm him down (Anamaria, 2000, personal communication).

She “felt better when they talked about the fact that men and women have equal rights and that husbands can also help their wives.”

Even though she was only 12 at the time, Anamaria understood the role-plays as a reflection of the rural reality and influenced her to make other choices in her life, such as going to the city to study:

It’s like in the campo, many husband and wives argue like in the socio-drama, my own parents have no education, they are illiterate and I feel the project acted these things out where the husband is not very understanding with the wife. This unequal relationship between the husband and the wife has influenced me to come to the city and study.

... it made me think that maybe I should study first. Not get married so young, that I should study first and look for a husband who would consult with me and not be like those men (Anamaria, 2000, personal communication).

Although most of the other girls from outside the Baha’i community who “watched” the project with Anamaria migrated to other cities where “they work” or presently have babies, Anamaria left her aging mother and extended family members to receive an education in Sucre. She was invited to work as an *empleada* (domestic worker) for Herman and Olga Banks, the local project coordinators, and their 3 children

in the city of Sucre. The arrangement included free lodging, a minimal stipend, and a commitment to her studies. At the time of this interview, Anamaría slept in a small alcove attached to the laundry room on the roof of the house and attended evening classes where she is now in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the last year in primary school. To receive this education in the city, she had to learn Spanish; within three years Anamaría is moderately fluent and is losing the Quechua accent.<sup>23</sup>

In the countryside, the women:

...are always working, they do everything. They do much more work than the men. They do the cooking, washing, all day they work. They work in agriculture, they help the men and they work with the sheep, When there isn't any work in agriculture, when it's a little slower, they weave blankets. The men work in agriculture, they work, well they work in agriculture. If they don't work in agriculture because its not time to weed or to plant, they often come to the city for temporary work in Sucre and they work carrying loads on their backs or helping out in construction just as helpers, doing labor. When the men come home from working in agriculture they rest in the evenings. But the women who are working with the men in agriculture still have to come home and cook, take care of the children and clean the house (Anamaría, 2000, personal communication).

Urban conditions are not much different. From the time she wakes up, to the time she goes to sleep, she is working. Her daily responsibilities consist of:

Getting up about 7:30 and I begin my work. I clean the kitchen, prepare the food and after I clean clothes, all those things. I work all day long (sweeping, cleaning, shopping, cooking) until about 4:00 or 5:00. Then, I go to my classes around 5, 5:30 to go to my school and I return around 10:00 p.m. I study when I have little bits of time I quickly study and do my homework for my class (Anamaría, 2000, personal communication).

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<sup>23</sup> The *ch* and *z* sounds are prominent in the Spanish of some Quechua speakers, generally in elders who come to the cities to sell in the market.

In addition to her weekly obligations, Anamaria goes home each weekend to cook and care for her mother. Besides her daily workload, she has the added burden of completing homework and studying for tests; Anamaria's cheerful smile was often worn by exhaustion and she was frequently sick during the three months I knew her.<sup>24</sup> But, the long-term rewards for Anamaria is worth the struggle since the material gain from selling on the streets is short-term and "in the market there are good days and not good days."

Her friends:

ask me why am I working and studying in Sucre, why would I want to do that. I could go to Santa Cruz, they say and earn more money working in Santa Cruz. I tell them that if I worked all the time in Santa Cruz I would make a lot of money but I wouldn't have time to study. And, the money goes, money is spent very easy, but if I study I have something that will serve me for a lifetime (Anamaria, 2000, personal communication).

In different ways, the 1989 TMCA project raised issues that influenced Florencia, Sadai and Anamaria to change the gendered patterns of the past through education. For Florencia, education was a means to self-improvement, for Sadai, education was the vehicle for community sustainability. After she matriculates, Anamaria believes "I can get a better job."

Next year I will enter 9<sup>th</sup> grade where the secondary education starts. Including this year it will be three more years. In this program I can finish 2 years in one year. After this, I will go to the university (Anamaria, 2000, personal communication).

Did Anamaria acquire these values from the 1989 TMCA project? She said:

I learned this from coming to Sucre. I would talk with my friends, my classmates in Sucre. We encourage each other to continue to study. I have people like myself who come from the *campo* to the city and we talk about how the people from the city treat people from the *campo* in a

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<sup>24</sup> Anamaria experienced frequent ear infections and colds.

humiliating way. I don't want to be treated that way (Anamaria, 2000, personal communication).

And, what led Anamaria to the Baha'i Faith and how did those teachings influence her life? She said:

What I like most about the Baha'i Faith is prayer. In the Baha'i Faith we pray. In the Catholic faith people do stupid things like drink alcohol.

Also, (consultation). Women and men could consult together. It could change the men. That there would be equal work, men would work equally, not just in agriculture but they would share all the work. They would raise their children and they would send them both to school. They would help them with their homework (Anamaria, 2000, personal communication).

Like the other two women, what Anamaria ultimately desires is to change the colonial attitudes and behaviors towards the indigenous people:

I don't want to be treated in a humiliating way. I want to be a person that is sincere and who respects people and who is respected by people (Anamaria, 2000, personal communication).

### Carmela:

Carmela was about 11 years old when Phoqonchi was selected as the first community for the 1989 TMCA project. At that time, ten years ago, there were about one hundred residents in Phoqonchi, and Phoqonchi had a strong and active Baha'i community and Local Spiritual Assembly (LSA) with a school to serve the children of the village. But, according to another interview subject, today "the community is almost dead" (Ortega, 2000, personal communication). Most everyone left for the north for agriculture or to the city "to find a better way of life" and some return for part of the year after the harvest. There isn't a school for the children and Baha'i activities are minimal.

Carmela's parents were active participants in the project until her father died from cholera in an epidemic. Since then, her mother moved away from Phoqonchi to farm on more fertile land. Carmela left Phoqonchi when she married, and her brother and his wife live in Phoqonchi as one of the two remaining families.

Unlike the more petite Quechua women of the Tarabuco region, Carmela is a taller woman and wears braids and the *pollera*. She is primarily a Quechua speaker but started to learn Spanish ten years ago after the project and presently speaks this second language with limited proficiency. With her husband, Eugenio, whose *testimonio* is included in this study and who holds a position of responsibility in the Baha'i community, she has learned a few words in English. She presently lives in a rural, but rapidly developing area in the urban outskirts of Sucre with her three small children. Their adobe home is considered 'modernized;' the inside walls are painted white, the interior is decorated with modest furniture, and the exterior is landscaped with intentional planting. Carmela operates a small store from her home with an attached room that is used for children's classes. The walls are decorated with detailed posters she made that outlines Quechua history and resistance for 500 years. Before the 1989 TMCA project began, the project coordinator said of Carmela, "...she couldn't even talk" (O. Banks, personal communication, 2000). Carmela "learned to read and write from the literacy efforts that followed the project" (Shoai, personal conversation, 2000), measurements the people with whom I spoke use as indicators of success.

I pursued the interview with Carmela, despite her aloofness, because I had learned that she was one of the "success stories" from Phoqonchi. Although she was eager at first to speak with me, Carmela avoided our interview on numerous occasions by



breaking appointments she made or by simply not showing up at the scheduled place and time. On the occasions when we could talk in public gatherings, she seemed very nervous and said she didn't want to be tape recorded or video taped. Eventually, she told me that the project was a long time ago and that she didn't remember anything. It wasn't until my translator explained, without my prompting, that I only want to talk about that project for my own investigation and that the interview was completely confidential, and not until her husband simultaneously encouraged (granted permission?) her to speak with me that she stopped evading me. Even then, she resisted a meeting that final meeting she arranged at her home. Eventually, we spoke in Spanish, but only for a short time and without a Quechua translator.

As a participant/observer in the Baha'i community of Sucre, I learned that Carmela is a faithful friend to Olga Banks, the project coordinator. I concluded that perhaps Carmela felt that she might be in a position to compromise her loyalty. She confirmed my hunch when answering the initial question about the project ten years ago, she said:

it was very helpful. They came and they taught. Olga Banks spoke Quechua, it was very helpful. We live in the *campo*. If people spoke Spanish, they wouldn't understand, then. Olga Banks was a very good teacher (Carmela, 2000, personal communication).

But, she also remembered the gatherings, festivals and talks:

We were working together. We have raised up the sense of the woman, of being a woman. We were taking the workshops. They were nice (Carmela, 2000, personal communication).

We participated...we were taking the courses. We don't remember much, we were young (Carmela, 2000, personal communication).

We invited other communities and they came. Lots of families came from other places, they came for the festivals, many came, the community helped the Local Assembly in Phoqonchi, our community helped with the festival (Carmela, 2000, personal communication).

Although the activities ended, the movement for women continue and requires resources:

...there isn't a program. But we are keeping up the steps for the women (Carmela, 2000, personal communication).

We have to improve the way things are, can't you see? We need things, in order to have meetings, we need things (Carmela, 2000, personal communication).

Finally, in my capacity of "researcher as detective," I uncovered "talk" about her relationship with her present husband before they married and years after the project. I include this information that came to me, unfortunately, in the form of gossip, only because it demonstrates change in attitude and behavior towards women status, untraceable directly to the 1989 TMCA project, but influenced by the teachings of the Baha'i Faith. When Carmela conceived before marriage to a man who had gained a position of respected authority in the Baha'i community,<sup>25</sup> their marriage received much attention because of the specific teaching in the Baha'i Faith with regards to premarital sexual relations. In most Quechua communities, women do not always marry the men with whom they share a child and most often men say they have a year to decide whether to "return the woman" if he doesn't like her cooking. But in this case, the two were encouraged by the LSA of Phoqonchi and Sucre to marry.

For me, now its good. Everyone knows, and it is just understood. Men and women participate in activities men and women together, can't you

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<sup>25</sup> There are no clergy in the Baha'i Faith. An Auxiliary Board member is an individual who is appointed to serve in an advisory capacity.

see? Before, no, they didn't know. Only the men went to meetings before, now the women (Carmela, 2000, personal communication).

Now the women are free to go where ever they want. Because the women have a lot of work. Some men don't help the women but now they are helping (Carmela, 2000, personal communication).

#### Julio C. and Victorio P.: Phoqonchi's Youngest and Oldest Elders

Julio, Carmela's brother and the head of one of two remaining households in Phoqonchi, was a young teen when he participated in the 1989 TMCA project. After the Nur University was contacted by the Project Director to assist Olga Banks in providing technical support to train the women to use the video camera, Julio was one of "the several men selected."<sup>26</sup> As the father of four children, the chair of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Phoqonchi, Julio bares the burden of his diminishing community.

Victorio is considered the village elder of Phoqonchi. He survived the cholera epidemic in Phoqonchi, and appears to be over 75 years old, an unusual age for a person in country with the average life expectancy of 40-50 years. He was an active participant in the 1989 project and appeared in the "Two Wings" video. He wears the characteristic white woolen cap and *ruana* shaped shawl (a large square poncho with a slit for the head) of the northern Chuquisaca region. Victorio's eyes pierce those of his listener and he asks direct, almost hypnotizing questions:

...he held his out to me and I noticed those same dirt, blackened hands I have become accustomed to seeing on the men and women who work the

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<sup>26</sup> The 1989 TMCA project design specifically called for women to use technology to increase self-confidence. Not only were the men trained with a few women, but the project coordinators assigned volunteers they recruited to do the actual filming. This interview subject reported the effects of the camera "helped us to lose our shyness" (R. Canasti, 2000, personal communication).

land. Although the air was cold, his hands were warm and his eye intense. Later, under the thick blanket of stars and minutes before our interview, he turned to me and asked in Quechua, “Why **do** the people from the city take photographs?” Without thinking, as if under a spell, I automatically replied, “Because they have lost what you still have.” The gaze was unbroken, but he smiled (5/9/00 Field Notes).

Julio’s story is strikingly different from his sister’s. Certainly, the age and gender difference between he and his sister influenced their perception of the project, but Carmela’s presenting theme of loyalty to the project coordinator contrasts with her brother’s perceptions of deception, trickery and lies. Besides talking about broken promises, Julio’s *testimonio* revealed a discrepancy in the men’s responses to priorities in community’s needs. Ten years later, the men identified issues more in line with those of the women’s. Also, as he spoke for the first time in ten years about the community’s feelings of “discouragement,” “disunity,” “unhappiness and discontent” and “lack of trust.” Finally, his *testimonio* illuminated another theme echoed in many other interviews—the lack of clarity of the original project goals and the misunderstanding of PAR methods. Victorio P.’s story echoed Julio’s but with the wisdom and wit of age.

Deception, Trickery and Lies: Pitfalls of PAR. Phoqonchi was selected as the implementation site, according to Herman, the husband of the project coordinator, because “they didn’t want anything,” compared with the other sites “that expected something concrete in return.”<sup>27</sup> But, when the 1989 TMCA data gathering exercises

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<sup>27</sup> At other times in Herman’s interview, he said that they chose Phoqonchi because that was where their truck broke down on the way to Poroma, the village they had originally selected. Other individuals from the National Assembly stated that Phoqonchi was selected because it was they that responded in letter to the NSA’s invitation to apply. Members of the Bolivian NSA reported that Phoqonchi was selected because of its strong Local Spiritual Assembly (C. Shoai, 2000, personal communication). Maria Luisa, his wife, said: “We had consulted with Sabino and Eugenio to go to a community near Paroma. I don’t remember the name. We rented a car. It was rainy season. What happened was the car got recked and where the car stopped was Phoqonchi. Sabino and Eugenio would say not Phoqonchi, some other community but that was where the car stopped. It was very far, we were only half way there. So, we said prayers and

asked the women and men to identify together their community's needs and work patterns, illustrated with available, rudimentary materials, the men drew a map on goatskin that included "houses, electricity, street lights, then water and everything." The map "told where there was to be electricity and water," and "where the road would go" (Julio, 2000, personal communication). According to a participant who lives outside Phoqonchi and who observed this PAR process, "that goatskin was sent outside the country so that there could be money sent to help develop the community" (F. Cardoso, 2000, personal communication). In addition to expecting they would get electricity and water, they also believed that they would receive a gas lamp:

First of all, they said that we would have a lamp. The lamp was for us. Then they said the lamp was for the whole project, not for us. The people began to become discouraged. They also didn't have as much confidence in the project. It caused disunity (Julio, 2000, personal communication).

The confusion demonstrates a common PAR pitfall and illustrates the importance of PAR ideology. Activities aimed to stimulate an interactive, communication process and yield non-tangible results, instead were perceived as a means for material development. The PAR process was not the only source of confusion. Also, the video camera that was to be used by the women to document the project process was repeatedly mentioned as contentious. He said:

Then, they said we would have a video camera. She promised us the video camera was ours, then we went back and said it wasn't (Julio, 2000, personal communication).

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consultated with the LSA of Phoqonchi and they said that they wanted the project. We talked with the community to see if they wanted it, they did. We only had the piece of paper from OSED. Carol helped to explain what the project was about. We explained to the community that the woman had to be developed, has to be educated and they liked it. We explained that this was not for the Baha'is, it was for the whole community, we have to work with the Sindicato and the whole community.

After that, she didn't have confidence in us, in leaving us with the video camera (Julio, 2000, personal communication).

At first they took photos of us and showed us and then they stopped doing that. We lost confidence in them. She said this was just a stimulus for us to use our intellectual abilities. Then, she stopped doing that and we lacked confidence in them (Julio, 2000, personal communication).

At first we were really excited and happy while we were learning about the camera. Some of us went to Nur. I was one of them. I was really enthusiastic. If we could continue the way it was, the project would have had a good result. But it didn't have any good results. We were fooled. We were tricked (Julio, 2000, personal communication).

The video camera was supposed to stay in our community and it didn't. That was a trick, a fraud (Julio, 2000, personal communication).

In addition to the confusion about the material objects, the lamp and video camera, Phoqonchi had other concerns, according to Julio. A culminating "community performance," called the festivals in Bolivia, was to have followed the qualitative community needs assessments, analyses, and role playing activities. For the performance, project participants were to invite the greater community to view the results of the activities—the issues and new solutions the participants to women's role and gender attitudes through the use of traditional media. While Julio understood the purpose of the festivals:

...to see the roles of the husband and the wife, how they can help themselves mutually, to ask if the wife washed the men's clothes, to ask if the men helped the wife wash her clothes, and to give advice about helping each other wash their clothes. The fathers and mothers were practicing doing theater, showing how a family should live, the husband and the wife and they did that through theater (Julio, personal communication, 2000).

He felt the festival lacked ...a stimulus, a real method." The participants became discouraged as the festivals were perceived as dishonest and disingenuous:

We even carried out the festivals in the school, we were really excited about participating. And when they filmed the festivals, when we presented ourselves with our typical clothes, they filmed part of it, but when they participated they filmed all of it. But they didn't film all of us. That made us discouraged. Then we realized she had not complied with what she promised (Julio, personal communication, 2000).

The project activities were scheduled to accommodate "those in charge" instead of the people for whom the project was aimed to benefit. Victorio said:

When they came, they call us and we have to obey in everything and we can't when we have the harvest, or another strong work. We have to do the opposite and then we don't have the harvest for the whole year (V.Flora, personal communication, 2000).

Julio and Victorio wanted me to know that from his perception, the 1989 TMCA project in Phoqonchi did not successfully accomplish its goals; first because the goals of the project were not clear, secondly because it ended too soon, and finally, because the methods appeared to change:

But I didn't understand what the purpose of the project was. I didn't ever know if the purpose of the project was to help us in the campo or to help people in the city (V.Flora, personal communication, 2000).

As I didn't really understand it well, I was left with doubt and I couldn't do anything (V.Flora, personal communication, 2000).

Those in charge of the project did not clarify the objectives (Julio, personal communication, 2000).

Now, in order to start any project we should have a clear idea of the goals and we should keep working until we accomplish our goals like what happened (Julio, personal communication, 2000).

Because what started didn't finish, not as much. The children were following our example of what we were doing and if things continued it would have had a positive affect (Julio, personal communication, 2000).

Like when we were taught how to use the video camera and then they didn't continue to let us use the camera. ...that really discouraged a lot of

us and we felt as though we were cheated (Julio, personal communication, 2000).

Any project would be good if it went on to accomplish the goals it sent out to accomplish (Julio, personal communication, 2000).

In other initiatives, it is (important) to have the objective stated clearly, so that it can be acted upon clearly (V. Flora, personal communication, 2000).

In terms of sustained change, Julio said:

According to what I have seen, nothing happened. I haven't seen any change.

From Victorio's perceptive, once the project traveled to other communities, the Phoqonchi participants were "left unhappy, discontent."

... they said that she had to go to another place where there were people that needed help. And, now without any effort, she "comes by the side of the road that is really comfortable" (takes an easy way out). Be careful that you don't leave your work unfinished, you have to finish what you start. The "budget" is not to work in easy places, but rather spend it in places that really need it.

Promises made have not been kept because they did not return.

Good Rectitude of Conduct. The rectitude of conduct of the project coordinator and her family came under question by this community, as well as others. In Phoqonchi, it was noticed that food was rejected, schedules were not respected, and that the family fought in front of others:

I want to say the ones who came they came with their children, they would argue. Nobody liked that. These families had problems in their own family.

She never consulted us about what time we could come to the workshops.

And, even when she slept very late and only attended to her children and not to us.

(The "true ones")...they eat with us, they sleep with us without rejecting us.



A Shift in the Men's Perception of Needs. Over time, the issues the women identified as priorities during the original project became important to the men. One of the additional consultants who was hired specifically for the Phoqonchi implementation told me that during the initial village participatory data collecting stage, the women were less interested in the electricity, road or lamp, but identified "health and school" as a priority. They said, "Our children don't know how to read and write. None of us do." Since many of the elders died in cholera epidemic, including Julio and Carmela's father, their small school closed, and the remaining community migrated to more productive agricultural regions, perceptions changed. Now, Julio, speaking on behalf of his "dying community" and as a Baha'i, talked about the importance of education and funding necessary to sustain the village population:

There are needs. We have worked for water, we have water, but not enough. Especially we all need how to learn to read and write. A general need would be to have a project that is financed. Most everyone would agree. Progress is revealed in material development. We have this need to elaborate projects and carry out projects. We have a need to educate our children, a good education. There are about three families that want to really educate our children well. Only the Baha'is have this need to really educate ourselves. The other families do not have this need (Julio, personal communication, 2000).

Sitting on a *pullo* (blanket) on the dirt ground under the stars late into the night in "the most remote place on the earth" (Grieser, 2000, personal communication) with the handful of people remaining in a once thriving community, I wondered what Julio would say to, for example, the World Bank, if he had the opportunity. I asked him. First, he identified the immediate, material needs of the community, but, like the young elders in

Puka Puka, went beyond “basic needs” to include spiritual ideas, such how a community can increasing its capacities for “knowledge and wisdom.” He said:

We would have to define the urgent needs for our community in a big consultation with the whole community. Right now, we need money. What we grow only provides for our families. There is nothing left over. When we grow our crops, it provides us for only food and clothing, nothing else (Julio, personal communication, 2000).

The most urgent are: one, a school. Second, are a need a sanitary post, and third, a multifunctional room. We are already elaborating this with the municipal government. A primary need is to have a team where we could study the family and improve our knowledge and wisdom. This is my personal desire, and is not shared by everyone, not everybody thinks like this because they only see the material needs, but a personal desire of mine (Julio, personal communication, 2000).

Victorio added:

The indigenous people are looking for freedom and justice for their people but they will find the promise with the word of God (V. Flora, personal communication, 2000).

Of that moment, on what seemed like the top of the world, with people whose combined worldly possessions included a hut, some sheep, children and a bag of potatoes, I wrote in my field notes:

Was it was the altitude, the potatoes, or the mystical moment, but I suddenly felt an existential angst along and combination of tremendous burden and privilege. Why was I here anyway? Do these men think I’m from U.S.AID, the World Bank? At this moment, I embrace the systems theorist’s assumption that no observation could remain independent of its observer. How would my mere presence influence life as we know it in Phoqonchi? (Field Notes, 5/9/00)

Victorio’s final words broke the silence of my thoughts:

All that happened is kind of deep, profound for us campesinos who just work in our fields. But surely you understand more deeply what happened (V. Flora, personal communication, 2000).<sup>28</sup>

### The Silent Women of Phoqonchi

In our interview, Julio did not talk about the women, nor did he provide a space for the two women, who sat with their babies next to him, to speak, even though I had directly asked them questions. Late at night, and after I was told the interview was over, I asked for permission to speak with the women alone. Julio told me the women were busy, but I that could speak for a short time in the morning before I left. After his wife prepared our morning breakfast of boiled potatoes and *aji* (a hot pepper and garlic paste), I followed her into her cooking room (without a tape recorder or my notebook). I asked her if she'd like to add to our last night's discussion or if she'd like to talk about her life. About the project, she only said, "two of us from the project are still here," but with tears streaming from her eyes, she turned directly to me and echoed Sadai's sentiments. She urged that there be a school in Phoqonchi for her children, because without a school, her children would have to grow up like her, and most importantly, she wanted her children to have a better life.

Maruja, my translator, returned to Phoqonchi after I left to complete the interviews with the traveling families who left for agricultural work. She spoke with three women, Lucia, Raquel and Graciela. All three women spoke in terms of a "before and after" and emphasized a change that occurred in the middle of the implementation.

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<sup>28</sup> I am not sure of the meaning of his last words, whether he implied I would know more because I had the opportunity to speak with the other key players of the 1989 project or because he thought I had insight to the lives of the indigenous people.

This caused a disruption in the “beautiful” and “nice” things they started learning, like “how to cook” and “how to say prayers.”

We were very happy learning many beautiful things.  
The youth helped each other and the children were living harmoniously.  
At home, we also lived in harmony, especially the parents.

...suddenly when the people saw that she didn't do what she said, she became cold (Lucia, 2000, personal communication).

Upon seeing this (the fields and how we weave on the video camera) we were very excited but everything fell apart (Lucia, 2000, personal communication).

...at the beginning it was very nice, but now we are very dismayed and declining (Raquel, 2000, personal communication).

At first, all worked well, but after five days, the people stopped coming, feeling dismayed (Graciela, 2000, personal communication).

Raquel talked about getting sick in the middle of the project and a home remedy of whey or serum<sup>29</sup> the project coordinator gave her “made me worse and lost a lot of weight also.”<sup>30</sup>

Even though promises, like the “vegetable gardens” were “unfortunately not completed” and the gossip and backbiting was “hurting the community,” the women talked about their desire to learn and expressed the importance of childrearing and capacitation:

The women wanted to learn a lot regarding their children.

I want to learn how to educate the children in all aspects,  
intellectual, physical and spiritual.

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<sup>29</sup> It is not clear from the translation from Quechua to Spanish whether the word referred to whey or serum. Since this interview was conducted by my translator and not myself, I did not have the opportunity to clarify the meaning.

<sup>30</sup> It is not clear from the interview whether this woman was sick from cholera or from another ailment.

Also, we have understood that it's desirable to capacitate ourselves in every way.

Despite the community's ability to carry on in the beginning, without the continual stimulus, the changes were not sustained:

...some of us who have understood the word of God, kept continuing on daily. We have learned how to consult within spouses and children and that we have to consult.

The transformation was apparent but now no longer.

Although the project goals were not clear to the women as well as to the men, the women did feel positive influences in the lives of the Baha'is in the community, however not in those who participated from outside the community (the *sindicato*) and one woman did not see change in men:

We didn't really know clearly the objective of the project, but we have learned however how to live as a real family.

A change was seen in some of the friends of the Faith, but others remained the same.

There was not a change in the men, but children's classes were offered.

An equitable (division of work ) is seen in the homes, there is more consultation in the families.

And, as the other men stated:

No one comes now and our children have abandoned us.

#### Jacinta and Maruja: The Making of the Next Generation

Jacinta is originally from Angostura, one of the villages involved in the implementation, and presently lives outside Sucre on land she and her husband bought near the airport. She is the mother of six children between the ages 31-17. She wears braids, the *pollera*, and the broad rimmed straw hat more typical of the Quechua in the

Cochabamba department. Generally, the mothers in the *campo* are toothless because “when there is money it usually goes to the men” (O. Banks 2000, personal communication) but in her family, Jacinta wears the false teeth.

Jacinta is the daughter of a “*antiguo caminate*,” (“an Ancient Walker”), one of the men who had dreams about, and walked on foot through the mountains and hills to find “the man from the East who would give back to the Indians what the Spaniards had taken” (E. Anelo, 2000, personal communication). Jacinta is also the mother of Maruja, my Quechua-Spanish translator for this study.

From Jacinta’s *testimonio*, we learn more about the organization of the project implementation and the lack of clarity and understand of the project goals. Her comments about how to generate change in the rural, indigenous communities vis-à-vis the youth contributes to knowledge production about GAD and sustaining culture.

Although Jacinta “did not participate in the project,” the project coordinator, Olga Banks, frequently called upon Jacinta to “assist” in the 1989 TMCA implementation. But, according to Jacinta, she was told little about her role or the goal of the project. In this series of narratives, Jacinta revealed new aspects to the confusion of whether the nature of the project was to provide material results or to teach the Baha’i Faith:

I ended up going because Olga Banks said, “let’s go to Phoqonchi. Can you accompany me there. But later I learned about the project. I didn’t understand really what was the purpose of the project until I got there. And then, the people talked about a project to put in portable water (Jacinta, 2000, personal communication).

We would frequently go out in groups, in groups together, we’d go out together to teach and deepen in the Baha’i Faith in the village, and because Olga Banks was a Baha’i, I thought we’d be going out to do some Baha’i activity in the community, to give some Baha’i workshops (Jacinta, 2000, personal communication).

I helped, for example, with the children, playing, saying prayers, I don't know how to read but I know songs and prayers by memory and I taught them to the children. Also, I participated in the dramas (Jacinta, 2000, personal communication).

The final passages in this series of responses acknowledged not only the confusion on the part of the participants, but also the “messy” intent of “those in charge,” and the thin boundaries between the NGO project and the Baha'i teaching project:

There seemed to be some confusion because of the mention of the Baha'i Faith and so forth, and UNIFEM as not something to say, there seemed to be some confusion there. There was much of that confusion. And when I would ask what is the purpose of the project and what is supposed to happen, what is it we are supposed to do, I was told it doesn't really matter. We're just have to come here and do what we're supposed to do. I was told (by the project coordinator) it doesn't matter if the people are confused, or understand, or what happens later. We just have to do this thing and go. I was not in agreement with that. I was worried about that. I got discouraged after that (Jacinta, 2000, personal communication).

No, for me there was nothing new that could have led to change. In reality, we did the same things we always did. We said prayers, read from Baha'i Writings (Jacinta, 2000, personal communication).

(Translator interrupts: “There is a small confusion between UNIFEM and the Baha'i meetings. She says that she remembers going to the workshop of Olga Banks. She liked it because they were talked about the equality of women. But, she's remembering other workshops where she learned more. That was not UNIFEM meetings” (S. Ortega, 2000, personal communication).

To this day, Jacinta said, “I do not have a clear idea” of the project goals. She did not perceive changes in gender attitudes or in women's status; here, in the final quote, she chided about men's inability to change. With her husband nearby, she laughed as she commented, “the men never help” but the joke aptly described the somber struggle and internal friction between personal transformation and cultural norms:

No, I didn't notice any change with men, women or children during the time of the project (Jacinta, 2000, personal communication).

Everything was the same, absolutely nothing changed (Jacinta, 2000, personal communication).

The men never help! What is that going to do for the men?! Even though they know their role. It's not important for them to do this. They know that Baha'u'llah teaches that they should help the women, that we have the same rights. We don't practice this and we haven't seen it. Change has not happened (Jacinta, 2000, personal communication).

Although, on the one hand, Jacinta denied any personal change from the project, she, on the other hand, explained how she gained new skills:

Always I helped with the children's classes and I wanted to hear what they were reading and studying. I was learning new things that I hadn't known before. It helped me to express myself more, to converse and to share with others (Jacinta, 2000, personal communication).

I had more confidence working with people (Jacinta, 2000, personal communication).

Similar to Julio's comment about "working until we accomplish our goals.." and "what started (we) didn't finish," Jacinta suggested that "... if the project went on for a longer time, there is a possibility that there could have been more change." In the following quotes, Jacinta made development personal and an act that begins at home. She articulated a kind of long-term, systemic development that can sustain culture by intergenerational reciprocity where the parents teach the children and the children teach the parents:

It would be nice to educate children from a young age. When the children are older, they can't change, it's difficult for them to change. There is so much work for the women to train the children and they don't know how to read (Jacinta, 2000, personal communication).

... from when the children are very small, that's the best time to teach these qualities and rights of women and men and develop these qualities. The children can share them amongst themselves, they can help each



other. The children can teach the parents. Even if the parents don't have the understanding, the children do and they can help their parents change (Jacinta, 2000, personal communication).

#### Maruja, the Next Generation

I can agree with these things from my own experience in my own family. The children who have studied the Baha'i Writings can help their parents learn (Maruja, 2000, personal communication).

Maruja, Jacinta's 28 year old daughter, is a living testimony to this reciprocal and intergenerational relationship:

When I was very little, first, my great grandfather was one men who went around on foot and was searching for the truth, so my mother was raised in the Baha'i Faith and she always encouraged us (Maruja, 2000, personal communication).

Her *testimonio* filled in the gaps about Jacinta's involvement in the project. She illuminated Jacinta's approach to development as personal and situated in the home; and illustrated, once again, the entanglement between the intent of the 1989 TMCA project and the teachings of the Baha'i Faith. Like Florencia and Anamaria, who are creating an alternative lifestyle for indigenous girls in the *campo*, Maruja portrayed the capacity for change within one generation by conveying new ideas about spirituality, studies and family. She explained more about indigenous identity formation and spirituality as resistance to mestization. Finally, Maruja talked about what it's like to become a role model for other young girls.

Maruja did not participate in the project directly, yet she supported her mother's participation and thereby benefited directly and indirectly. She described their involvement:

When she participated in this project, my sister and I would stay home like mothers, second mothers for the younger children, and that helped us mature. We were never afraid to speak up and out (Maruja, 2000, personal communication).

My mother would share information with me about the festivals, dancing and accompany with the music. When they had a workshop, they would finish it by having a music festival by having music and dancing. That was a great stimulus for the people to continue to participate. My mother would share with me what would happen. My mother accompanied Olga Banks because she is a native Quechua speaker, but also because always liked to participate in activities, especially for women (Maruja, 2000, personal communication).

I met Maruja when she was 28 years old and completing her first year at a university in Sucre. Her area of study is:

...education. It is so exciting. What I am learning about is the stages of development in children, how they can be encouraged in their growth (Maruja, 2000, personal communication).

Again, it unclear whether Maruja's was influenced by the 1989 TMCA project to pursue an education, her particular family's situation or from the teachings of the Baha'i Faith.

She said,

Now, the physical aspects of childcare, taking care of the physical needs, giving them intellectual stimulation, feeding them properly, giving them stimulation, teaching them how they are going to memorize, are very important. The Baha'i Writings talk about the education of the child and the relationship with the mother. This is the environment everyone will benefit from (Maruja, 2000, personal communication).

In terms of her person and identity, Maruja glides "between worlds," that is, one day, she wore the *pollera* skirt and braids, another day she wore pants or a plain skirt and her hair loose with a barrette. Clothing:

...is not the most important part, the most important part of a person is their values. It's not important if their clothes are different, that doesn't mean to say that they have rejected the identity and values of their pueblo,

their community. I think, in this area, that a person who comes to the city from the country, one ought to help them to talk their history and their culture so they feel proud of it. Just because someone has changed the way they dress doesn't mean that they lost their values or are not proud of their community. One part that can help all this is to study spiritual writings because the city has more danger of falling into certain situations (Maruja, 2000, personal communication).

Maruja made decisions similar to those of other women in this study to break cultural patterns and postpone marriage and childraising in order to acquire an education. In these two passages, she expressed her understanding of spirituality within the context of family, stressed the importance of shared vision, and articulated balancing the tension between studies and family:

Basically, we were created in life to serve a power greater than ourselves. Then, in this way we are to serve humanity. What a better way but to share in that love but in a marriage. The purpose of marriage is share a love for God. Bringing another being into the world is to raise them spiritually so that they will share this same love. In this way, I want to serve in marriage in this way, but there are not others that I can share this with. If God is willing, in the future, I will meet a person who shares in this same vision (Maruja, 2000, personal communication).

I would dedicate most of my time to raising a baby, we know how important it is to raise a child properly, when children are babies, it is more difficult, they need so much support, I would give myself to my child in all aspects. I would have given more time to my child than to my studies in the beginning, then, as the baby got older, I can continue my studies. It's never too late to study (Maruja, 2000, personal communication).

Maruja was one of the first women to identify with a role model, and she named some women—historical and local—who inspire her. But, like Florencia, she too, is becoming a role model for other young girls, a situation that my questioning led her to recognize:

I never thought of this before, but just last week at the convention in La Paz, but a young woman told me this story. She talked to me for a while,

she told me that many of the young *hermanas*-sisters—who are here see me as a model, look up to me here. She said that I was a model for them. So, I started thinking—what do I have (Maruja, 2000, personal communication)?

Maruja is a part of the new generation of rural, indigenous women who have emerged within the past ten years; women who travel alone, women who go back to school and pursue education, and women who participate in decision making and women who discovered, and used, voice and speak out.

Jania:

Jania is an elder woman who appeared to be in her late 60s, although the life expectancy for women in the *campo* is generally between 42-50. Her work is in the fields and worn on her hands, where despite her age, she actively farms. She lives in Angostura, a community about 100 miles west of Sucre and towards Cochabamba, where the roads are good and the weather is warmer. The village is nuclear with small houses clustered together off the side of a mountain and set beyond the highway and across a dry riverbed. The land is fertile; people of Angostura farm and sell green vegetables the market. On the day I arrived in her village, only one woman with her baby could be found:

We were told no one was here today, they were all (at another another village) for a holiday event. We walked back down the hill, across the river and drove to the next village. The people were not there. We drove to the next village down the road and were told people were back at the village that lies before Angostura. We turned around and drove back down the road. A large crowd of children and adults were gathered around the local school. A man using a microphone was announcing the results of an auction raffle. A relay race around the school had just begun. On the other side of the road, women were selling corn drinks, ice cream, and candy. Maruja disappeared into the crowd to look for some women for me to

interview. She returned about a half an hour later with an elder woman (Field Notes, 5/25/00).

As a participant of the project, Jania remembered:

...I was always helping because I would talk about the role of women, we'd reflect about this, I liked what Olga Banks did, I participated because I like talking about the relationship between women and men (Jania, 2000, personal communication).

She repeated themes already spoken by others about activity followed by abandonment, discouragement and distrust. She conveyed confusion about the project goals and activities of the Baha'i Faith by naming Baha'i community events, such as Feasts, and LSA responsibilities, such as "treasurer of the activities":

...lots of people participated but now there is nothing. There were many who participated, my family as well. Even grandparents participated. But, I, because I lived there, participated also. I was the treasurer of the activities and when Olga Banks would come there would be lots of activities, but now there is nothing.

Always were there activities. They came with their family. There were always activities with the Faith. The community was very active, 19 day Feasts, celebrations.

Olga Banks stopped coming, she didn't return and now there are no activities, nothing. It was destroyed.

And, as she hasn't come back, the people lack confidence. She came for a short time and abandoned us, this left us lacking trust (Jania, 2000, personal communication).

Along the drive to this more agriculturally viable community, I noticed a number of large signs along the side of the road in front of communities advertising NGO development projects, such as schools established by UNICEF and housing developments funded by PLAN International. Speaking on behalf of her community, Jania explained

how others perceived the organizing efforts and leaving suddenly as common to (Western) development:

There are many organizations that just come and go, but since she didn't come, what the people thought was that this was just like any of those organizations that just come and leave (Jania, 2000, personal communication).

As mentioned elsewhere, the 1989 TMCA project design was intended for replication and accounted for varied cultural contexts (Grieser, 2000, personal communication). However, the specific, and volatile context in Third World countries is unpredictable and evolving. The following passage illustrated how the Bolivian construction of nationalism, which presently bypasses the realities of the indigenous people, and the ineffective implementation reinforced a perceived sense of abandonment:

Before, people were receptive to everything, they accepted all. Now, the people, there have been many new laws, and they have no confidence in anything. And, as she hasn't come back, the people lack confidence (Jania, 2000, personal communication).

Not unlike Julio and Jacinta's whose concerns regarding the short duration of project that influenced individual's ability to fully practice the new gender knowledge, Jania agreed the community needed more time with "the outside" to maintain lessons learned:

In the beginning, there were starting to be some changes and we were practicing what we learned. But since the visits stopped abruptly and there was no support from the outside as a stimulus, it deteriorated, it stopped (Jania, 2000, personal communication).

And, like the community of Phoqonchi, which had an active Baha'i community and a strong LSA, the Baha'i community of Angostura weakened after the 1989 TMCA project:

Before, this was a community from which the Ancient Walkers came, this was a very spiritually deepened and active community. After she came

and left, there has been nothing. There has been no change, it is the same (Jania, 2000, personal communication).

Jacinta, originally from this community and to whose parents the previous passage refers, commented on the helter-skelter way in which she believed she was sent out to “round up people.” She suggested this approach “...created dependency in the communities.” Projects end when funding ceases and without explanation or local adoption, dependency breeds insecurity:

Now, the people realize something....but I don't know exactly what the reason is for why activities stopped happening after this project. But maybe people realized something but I don't know what it is (Jania, 2000, personal communication).

#### Olga Banks: the 1989 TMCA Local Project Coordinator

Like the other women whose *testimonio* revealed varying degrees of “transformation,” Olga Banks’s story also uncovers a woman, who admits today that ten years ago “I was not prepared for this project” because “I didn’t know how to do it.” But, because of the project, however, she says she “has more courage,” “can speak,” and “started my bachelors degree.”

Olga Banks is this study’s first “truly” Bolivianized interview subject to give *testimonio*. Like the majority of other brown skinned *bolivianos*, Olga Banks is the second generation to live the urban lifestyle in ‘modern’ Bolivia—and by definition, made in the image of the unified national identity. Her grandmother was Quechua from the *campo* and her mother and father learned Spanish and migrated to the urban centers of Cochabamba and Sucre. She was born and raised in the city as a fluent Spanish speaker; Quechua and, like most *mestizajes*, a combination of Quechua and Spanish were

spoken in the home. She looks like most *bolivianas urbanas* who wear fashionable, Western clothing, make-up, and short, often styled, hair.

In her early 20s, she attended an *escuela normal*, a two year teacher's college, where she taught for only a few years before meeting her American husband, a Baha'i "pioneer" to Bolivia who was intent on marrying his "Bolivian Princess." At 45, Olga Banks is completing her *licenciatura*, the equivalent of a four-year bachelor's degree, in rural education.

With her husband, Herman, Olga Banks adopted three indigenous children, an Aymara from the north, a Quechua from the central *altiplano*, and a Guarani from the tropical lowlands. The children, two girls and a boy, are presently between the ages of 13 and 18; they are tri-lingual and Westernized. The family live in the heart of Sucre in a renovated home they built on top of the mother-in-law's single floor apartment. They own and operate a language school in a separate location and they established a "homeschool" in their house where Herman takes in a few students in addition to homeschooling his own.

1989 TMCA Project Protocols. According to the Project Director of the 1989 TMCA project, the criteria for the selection of a local project coordinator were residence in the Chuquisaca department, the desired region for the project implementation, and knowledge of the language and culture. Although Olga Banks had no previous experience or knowledge in development or in participatory action methods, she met the criteria; she volunteered and was selected to serve as local project coordinator for the 1989 TMCA project. Also, Olga Banks was a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Bolivia



and the Local Spiritual Assembly of Sucre at the time and therefore could be in regular communication with the different institutions. She said:

The NSA...I said to them 'who should be in charge of the project, there could be other Baha'is in other departments who might want to be coordinator of the project, it didn't necessarily have to be me. The NSA just said we want you to do it, you are a teacher, you have had a school and you have capacity in that area. So, I said yes. I never had any interest in money or fame, my only interest was to serve the Faith (O. Banks 2000, personal communication).

"False Starts". Olga Banks anticipated training from the individual the Project Director sent to brief the Bolivian NSA. However, as mentioned in the 1989 TMCA project background, the NSA did not receive the individual (see: Chapter 1, Section 2). In addition, Olga Banks identified two additional problems, the missing project documentation, and the NSA decision to implement in one instead of many diverse communities:

(the person to brief the NSA) came to help out. She said that she was an expert in multimedia and that she would teach me some multimedia skills, like art, music. I said how happy I was that she had come because I don't know anything about that. But she never taught me anything—she was busy all the time! She made some sort of a diagram after I bugged her a lot to help me out with the project. It was sort of a design for how the project would function. What she told me was what was most important was that everyone should participate, and that participation should be encouraged through mediums of art, music, theater, and dramas and consultation. Everything is by means of consultation (O. Banks 2000, personal communication).

Then I asked her, "How am I going to do this project?"...I didn't have any documentation about the project, I said, "Where is the documentation so I can study?" I didn't receive any report of the project or information about it until one year after the beginning. All I had was a letter from the Universal House of Justice looking for help on the project. And the NSA also asked for some documentation and the UHJ didn't send it and didn't send it and didn't send it (O. Banks 2000, personal communication).

After 6 months the plan came with incomplete information about the project. For those 6 months the report was incomplete; one year after the project began Mona arrived with more information about the report. During those 6 months I didn't know what to do because there was not plan, I could have done anything I wanted but I wanted to know what the intent had been of those who wrote the project so that I could implement it well.

I consulted with the NSA to help me and they formed a committee to help me know what to do, because I didn't want to do just anything, whatever came to mind. The name was the commission for the project and (they helped me).

So, (finally) we began with the diagnostic since they didn't have the plan of the project in the beginning and since the people in charge, me, and Nur decided to. So the workshops that we held here in Sucre were one year after the project began and before I consulted... I didn't have the plans of the project so I asked the NSA and they said what am I going to do and so before that first year since the beginning, since I didn't know what to do, I consulted with the NSA and my husband. They suggested I read the letter over again and make something out of it and be creative. It was about Baha'i subjects like consultation and the importance of women.

...the NSA named me as the coordinator of the project which was realized at the end of 1991, beginning with a diagnostic. We finished at the end of 1994. Originally, it was proposed or designed to be executed in 6 communities, but we ended up working in only four because we were concerned that if we tried to do too much in too many communities we wouldn't be successful (O. Banks 2000, personal communication).

Eventually, and after a number of efforts at many institutional levels to support Olga Banks, including hiring additional consultants and technical support from the Nur University, Olga Banks announced that she could not implement the project alone. She said:

I told them (the NSA) I couldn't go alone to the countryside and I asked them if I could go with my family. They said no problem.

Everything we did was with the whole family (O. Banks 2000, personal communication).

Her husband, Herman, and their three small children, who were around the ages of 3 – 8 years old, accompanied Olga Banks to each village to implement the 1989 TMCA project. She brought her family for three reasons; first, because she believed a gender equity project to improve women's status should include the family. Secondly, she was afraid to travel to the *campo* alone. Thirdly, if changes in attitudes and behaviors were to be an outcome of this project, she wanted her family to change with her. She said:

... So the man (in the villages) said that they didn't like projects only for women because they feared women would become brainwashed or something and would be more dominating over the men. For this reason, we changed to work with the whole family. The men told us this when we consulted with the whole community.

...(the criticism said) that it was not correct that I should go with my family, that I should go alone. So, one time I went alone without my children and just with the car and because there was no men to defend me, drunken men came and tried to harm the car. That night, since there was no one to see how things were going, the driver raped one of the participants that went with her from the city. Everyone hid it, no one knows about it. The driver raped the girl from Sucre. He is now in jail but not because of that, for something else. Since that time I always went with the family.

I was with my family I don't want to change alone I wanted the whole family to change (O. Banks 2000, personal communication).

In our interview, Olga Banks mentioned "*la diagnostica*," (the focus group), referred to a few descriptive comments of the activities, and defended the "criticism" against her, but she actually spoke little of what went on with the women and men in the communities. She said:

...my understanding first of what had to be done was to make people aware of the rights of women and men through music, art.

What we talked about with the participants are like two oxen one women and men the women is the balance, both have to work as if they were in balance (O. Banks 2000, personal communication).

And, she pointed out many positive influences of the 1989 TMCA project on the lives of the women participants:

And together there was elections of LSAs and there were more women elected on LSAs. It was influencing that there were more women elected. The women would attend more and more Feasts and meetings and would give their opinions, talking and talking.

The girls came from the communities here (Sucre) to study. They are less afraid to visit people in the city now. There are women who come here from the country who were afraid to speak. In one community, there is a family farm and they have united to get an irrigation system because they always had trouble getting water because they live on a high hillside. Also, the families in those communities are trying their best to send their children to schools and some schools are really far away (O. Banks 2000, personal communication).

The Transformation of Olga Banks. Mostly, Olga Banks spoke about the changes in her own life, and to do so, she turned to the idea of her common bond with the women from the *campo*. Here, she reveals her essential connection to the female project participants vis-à-vis her identity as “woman,” and, like the other women who wanted more for their children, she, too wanted new options than those of her mother’s:

I, as a woman, was also beginning to grow, to develop in my participation, growing along with the rest of the women I was teaching, I learned along with the project also and was not afraid to talk any more and those sort of things.

I am a women who has fought as a woman to educate myself because before I wasn’t able to speak freely when I wanted to. I think the women in the countryside also suffer. I have seen my mother and other women who have to almost kill themselves to almost earn a living and for this reason I am studying for my license (degree) because I need to improve

my life I think it's a goal to help other women. And that I have freedom I think its necessary to have freedom to do what I want and not always what men want. I think that way women will be freed from the limitations like prostitution, violence, those things, and it will be more just (O. Banks 2000, personal communication).

Olga Banks's voice, confidence, and construction of knowledge is fledgling. In the first passage in this series of three quotes about women's status, Olga Banks turned to a book, most likely one she's used in her course work, and articulated the conditions for women in Bolivia. Then, she spoke from her own subjective voice to outline what she believes are the concerns for the indigenous woman in Bolivia. She said:

From 1992-1993 the sec. General says there were 70,000 reported cases of violence against women. And almost 41 percent of those cases are related to divorce because of maltreatment of women and this violence is hindering the progress of women. They don't have rights of life, or have healthy life or mental health and it is a contradiction going against the way justice should work.

In the *campo* in Bolivia (the woman) can't read or write. The woman is behind. She is left behind and ignored. Treated badly, abused. When she speaks no one listens to her or pays attention even though they say she has the right to speak. Little participation.

Then after, she doesn't have the right to be respected. The right to her health, her nutrition needs to be improved, mental and physical health. One example, when a man, if he has any problems with his teeth he immediately goes to the dentist but if it's a woman, she suffers. I have many friends from many rural communities, most of them don't have the habit of going to the doctor, they have never seen a doctor. She prefers to give the food to her husband, sacrifices everything to him or the children and takes nothing for herself. Another idea I think women need to learn is that women have to consult with their families. If she consults with her family she's not going to be so nervous over things or get angry over things because she will learn that problems have answers or solutions. Also, she will be more happy in her family and there might not be so many divorces (O. Banks 2000, personal communication).

Although Olga Banks was criticized in her capacity as coordinator by multiple sources at different organizational levels, she gained enough confidence to accept the support of her U.S. husband to eventually enroll in a rural education degree program through Nur University in Sucre about 7-8 years later:

For me the project was very important. I never had the courage before, I never would have started my bachelors degree. It has transformed me (O. Banks 2000, personal communication).

For Olga Banks, the memory of the 1989 TMCA project remained alive, despite the ambivalence from the criticism. My research and presence in her life for three months had caused this woman to look at herself in ways she might not have, which caused our relationship hardship (see: The Researcher's Role in Chapter 3). Because the mode through which I collected data, and because the lens through which I viewed my relationships was action research from feminist perspectives, I stressed development *as* personal and an activity conducted within the home. Therefore, in our informal moments and in our interview sessions, I encouraged Olga Banks to make history alive and bring the project forward into her current studies. While I was there, she decided that her *lisenciatura* (bachelor's degree) thesis would revisit her role in the 1989 TMCA project. She said:

For me, the project has not finished. For example, I continue to refer to this project for women in my studies. It has helped me a lot as an individual, that I have to be educated, in how I educate my children and how we have to educate other women. Since the project we've always had people at our house that we've been helping out, the girls, women. That's why we continue with our school at home, that's why we're hoping to open up a school (O. Banks 2000, personal communication).

Eugenio:

I strategically close the *testimonio* section of Chapter 4 with an account given by Eugenio, an educated Quechua man with “responsibilities of service (in the Baha’i community) through my position as Auxillary Board member...and in charge of the institutes in Sucre.” Because of his position, he, and my driver, Sabino, are the two men closest to the realities of the Quechua experience, the individuals in the Baha’i communities and the conditions of the Baha’i institutions. Also, he is married to Carmela, the young woman from Phoqonchi.

Eugenio’s account of the 1989 TMCA project implementation and the experiences of the participants conveyed an overarching perspective of the project’s successes and failures. In addition, he included in his *testimonio* knowledge of lessons learned for future GAD projects in the rural, indigenous regions in Bolivia. Interestingly, his account differs dramatically from his wife’s, who said little to nothing about the project, perhaps to not betray her loyalty to the project coordinator. His account serves to illustrate how men’s *testimonios* can also impart knowledge about GAD without patronizing women.

His opening statement about the purpose of the 1989 TMCA project reiterated the blurred boundaries between UNIFEM, the BIC and specific teachings of the Baha’i Faith. For example, Eugenio understood the 1989 TMCA project “to promote the participation of women in the processes of development in the Faith and in the communities.”

Although no other interviewees mentioned his role in the 1989 TMCA project, Eugenio believed he served in a collaborative capacity to the project:

I participated in this project collaborating with the coordinator of this project, collaborating with translations where the workshops were held, collaborating in the explanation of the concepts and clarifying some of the objectives she wanted to share with the friends with whom she was working (Eugenio, 2000, personal communication).

The approach of using traditional media as a communication tool, including the use of the video camera to document the process was “effective...

although we were not accustomed to this particular approach, but using the photographs, video camera, tape recording, is very essential to documenting the project and training the youth in how to use these methods is very important (Eugenio 2000, personal communication).

The selection of the rural communities as sites for project implementation was helpful because:

It is best to visit the rural areas because there is much more need to give attention to these rural areas. In the urban areas, there are mountains of organizations like NGOs, but in the rural areas, there are no resources like this. It is best that the rural areas receive attention (Eugenio 2000, personal communication).

Finally, Eugenio said the 1989 TMCA project taught participants technical and life skills, in addition to shifting gender attitudes:

...for example, we learned how to document the activities in which we developed. We used video, pictures and writing. Some of the participants had success, for example, the practice of consultation to plan family and community activities.

(Also), in consultation on a daily basis with families.

(And) in giving women more opportunity to participate in different areas or roles in which they hadn't had opportunity and (finally) there was better treatment for women (Eugenio 2000, personal communication).

But, on the other hand, these changes did not reflect the whole community:



...in certain ways, there were some changes in the treatment of women basically. Some individuals improved, about 30% (Eugenio 2000, personal communication).

In the following passage, Eugenio affirmed the importance of “those responsible for implementation” to understand the philosophy and methodology of PAR, he stressed the relationship between individuals and institutions and the coordination between institutions, and identified problems with assumption about money:

Missing was the lack of consideration for the local institution. The personnel, the people who were in charge of this project, forced their ideas on people, tried to impose what they wanted to do without taking into account the local community structure or institutions. This confused the people. One was this. Another was the personal aggrandizement of certain people running the project and the lack of not letting the local institution having their opinions. Another was the lack of coordination between institutions at all levels. Also, other difficulties we had was the disagreement there was of the coordinators of the project when the participants wanted to learn the history of their ancestors. This was not permitted. Also, when their particular questions about the program were asked and the answers not given. This caused disharmony also. For example, when they were asked about the law ‘ingra’ they were told the law doesn’t concern us, we are Baha’is. (the ‘ingra’ is the agrarian reform law.)

Other difficulties or results negative were those that were responsible for this program is that said one thing, they talked about how family should be, but in their own personal relationship between husband and wife and parents and children they did not show a good example. They did not show in their lives what they were saying in their lives (Eugenio 2000, personal communication).

Additionally, he revealed that suspicion existed surrounding the project’s funding, both from within the Baha’i community and from the community at large who were invited to participate:

I believe the Baha’is understood it was a project that was auspiciated or encouraged by the Baha’is and those who were not Baha’is thought it was a Baha’i project with a lot of money involved. I suggest for the people

who were not Baha'is the word 'project' implied a lot of money and think that the coordinators of this project received a lot of money (Eugenio 2000, personal communication).

Also, he clarified the basis for some confusion regarding subsequent projects with similar goals:

...after this project we had a teaching project Ruhiyyah Khanum. In this project we tried to recuperate and reanimate these communities where the UNIFEM project was implemented so they can rise and also within this project we tried to stimulate the participation of the women. With this kind of activity, it was possible at the time to try to remedy some of the problems (Eugenio 2000, personal communication).

Based on these lessons learned, Eugenio shared ideas he and the project participants made for future development:

...some members of the community suggested that instead of the project continuing, they wanted to suspend the project. Communities would like to have another project similar to this one but that it should be administered by a Local Spiritual Assembly (Eugenio 2000, personal communication).

In my estimation if a program like this were to continue, the people of the project should receive training in how to behave correctly with a rectitude of conduct. That is one. Another is that the coordinators of the program know how to live in the campo, know the realities in the campo, and the problems in the campo. Insist that if the program were to continue it should be under the direction of a local institution (Eugenio 2000, personal communication).

Problems, he said, occur with outsiders in the *campo* when "one is when offered food, refusing it." Also, "the attitudes (are one) of prejudice. People from the city have a prejudice against people from the campo."

Contrary to Jacinta's view that little progress has been made to shift gender attitudes and behaviors in the home, Eugenio observed, "in the Baha'i system, it is improving a lot. (The oppression of women) in the Baha'i system, that doesn't exist."

#### A Man Produces Knowledge of GAD

Gender equality is a two-fold process. Religion and culture has bound women to their "timidity" and lack of confidence, and conquest taught men their *machismo*:

...one, their (women's) timidity, shyness. Another is to liberate themselves from their prejudices from religion and culture. The other is the supposition is that they think they don't know, the campesinos. They think that only the professionals can think (Eugenio 2000, personal communication).

We lived in a system of enslavement where the land owners treated our ancestors with a bad attitude. They taught us to order our women and if they didn't because they loved their wives, the land owners would hit the women. If they were not treated poorly the land owners would treat the women badly (Eugenio 2000, personal communication).

Development, Eugenio believes, is a reification of colonialism:

(...the campesinos) think that all foreigners only come to negotiate some kind of deal. People in my neighborhood think that foreign people come to take advantage of them. Not everyone, but some. Maybe from an old model mental model that since the conquerors came from another country, they still think everyone is out to take something (Eugenio 2000, personal communication).

## CHAPTER V

### ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### Introduction

The intent of the 1989 TMCA development intervention was to include men in a communication process to change gender attitudes and behaviors and to improve women's status among rural indigenous communities. The project was implemented in three diverse regions of the world, Cameroon, Malaysia and Bolivia. The goal of this study was to learn if the desired changes from the original intervention occurred in the Bolivian site and to engage in PAR from feminist perspectives with rural Quechua Indians to create spaces for women and men to speak freely about their lived experiences and daily lives. What evidence did this study glean?

The study objectives that guided this study initially were:

- To determine, ten year after the initial intervention, what changes, if any, occurred in the lives of the Quechua women and men participants in the Bolivia site as a result of an early Gender and Development initiative funded and implemented through the strategic cooperation between two international organizations.
- To specify the nature of the changes, if any, in the community as a result of this development intervention.
- To identify whether and/or how the community supported, sustained or resisted these changes.
- To determine whether the original goals of the project were met, and whether there were any unpredicted results of the project.

- To identify what lessons can be learned to inform policy planners about gender development and about the long-term sustainability of the approach.

As I investigated the recent events and the colonial past of a poor, politically unstable Third World country in economic and political transition, an unpredicted result required that I reformulate new questions. Even though I was in the field for three months, not nearly enough time to conduct a “full-blown” ethnography, the nature of the ethnographic-oriented methods and feminist approaches to PAR methods enabled me to delve deeper into a cultural situation. One specific change within one particular woman caught my eye. The one Quechua young woman who appeared to be exemplary in acquiring additional education was leading an exodus of other young women to the urban centers and had reinvented her appearance as a Western college tThe new questions I formulated to help me make meaning from this change were:

- What does it mean that a participant of the 1989 TMCA intervention was clad in her pre-Colombian Indian attire only ten years earlier and redressed as the urban *cholita* for five years, and was now reproduced in the image of a “modern” Western university student?
- Was this woman wearing the identity of Bolivia’s “new theology”—neoliberalism—as resistance to Western hegemony, or to reproduce ‘the modern woman?’
- How does environment influence identity, does identity change with a new wardrobe and does dress erase indigenous-ness?
- Was this change in response to the 1989 TMCA project, and if so, is it considered a success or failure?

- What does it mean for the community and its sustainability when indigenous women change their dress?

This chapter reports out the answers to these questions and what I learned. To overview, the study found that all of the women and men who participated in the 1989 TMCA project remembered “UNIFEM” coming to their communities to teach about “women,” but their recollections of the goals of the project and their perceptions about what actually happened were mixed. For some, the new behaviors were sustained; for others, there was a relapse back to the customary relations. The research experience provided the women and men with whom I spoke an opportunity to break their silence about lingering ill feelings and about their concerns for their community’s ability to endure.

Most importantly, this study found unpredicted results for a population not identified as the targeted audience—the young girls. The lessons learned by these young girls about education and the efforts they made to achieve that end influenced unpredicted results for the communities whose young girls migrated to the urban centers. In light of current literature that supports urban migration as a viable and cost-efficient solution to reducing poverty in Bolivia’s rural regions, this unpredicted finding makes an important contribution.

In the first section, I discuss the implementation challenges the 1989 TMCA project faced. In the next section, I explain the evidence that indicates mixed sustained results. Following, I explain the unpredicted results for individuals and then for their communities. Since one of the purposes of this study was to animate a PAR experience

within the community I researched, I include in this chapter the findings of that PAR process.

### Initial Findings

#### False Starts from the Beginning

I found that the 1989 Traditional Media as Change Agent project had many false starts right from the beginning that ultimately affected the success of the project at the grassroots level. First, it is not unusual for a donor funded international development project to experience a time lag between the proposal stage and the actual, “on-the-ground” implementation, particularly when donor agencies partner with Southern NGOs or local, grassroots institutions. The UNIFEM/BIC “Traditional Media as Change Agent” project was no exception. The institutional mechanisms of the Baha’i community took three years to plan and approve the project before it moved down to the next level, which was the National Spiritual Assemblies, administrative bodies that have autonomous decision making over the Baha’i activities in their country (Powers, personal communication, 2001).

Then, once Bolivia was accepted as the third implementation site, the secretary of the Bolivian National Spiritual Assembly (NSA) refused an initial briefing deemed crucial to the success of the project.<sup>1</sup> Several reasons were offered for the missing link. First, because of the geographical context and travel difficulties in Bolivia, the NSA had

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<sup>1</sup> Organizational transformation studies have long indicated the most important criteria for achieving full organizational participation is the commitment and involvement from those in upper-level management (Senge, 1990,1999). Majid Rahnema (in Escobar, 1992) asserts that for participatory, alternative visions of development that assist “bottom-up” initiatives to succeed, “highly decentralized, non-bureaucratic, *inter-cultural* rather than inter-national network of persons and groups” are needed (*italics in original*). And, Agenda 21 notes a successful ingredient for the success of international strategies implemented at the grassroots is “the active and full participation of all groups in society” (Sitarz, 1994).

difficulty organizing a meeting of the nine Assembly members from all the various departments in Bolivia when the consultant arrived (C. Shoai, 2000, personal communication). Secondly, the NSA secretary stated the briefing would “take away from the teaching work” and suggested to the consultant that she should join the activities in the rural regions (M. Grieser, 2000, personal communication). Other explanations pointed to the personality and administrative styles of the individual responsible for scheduling.

At the national level, it took each NSA several months, up to a year, to appoint a coordinator and set a time for the first workshop (Grieser, personal communication, 2000). Once a local coordinator was appointed in Bolivia, the individual claimed she never received an adequate training nor did she receive the project documentation from the Project Director until a full year into the implementation (O. Banks, personal communication, 2000). According to the consultant hired to conduct the briefing with the NSA, once her training was rejected, she met briefly with coordinator and then left the country (Subert, personal communication, 2000). Additional problems stemmed from local coordinator’s lack of knowledge and experience in development or with PAR methods. The coordinator made a number of attempts for clarification from the National level and eventually, a committee was appointed to provide her guidance even though they were not trained either and lived in dispersed areas of the country.

Meanwhile, the Project Director was not aware of all the development resources within Bolivia at the onset, nor did the NSA make recommendations for Nur University, a Baha’i inspired initiative with expertise in grassroots development, to get involved. Only after a follow-up trip was made to Bolivia and additional outside consultants



brought in, did the Project Director try to involve the expertise of development practitioners at Nur. Their involvement was short-term and slightly problematic.<sup>2</sup>

The implementation activities began in Phoqonchi with the new consultants, and at the end of that first year, the NSA agreed to include other communities, as the original project design intended.

### Unclear and Confusing Goals

All the participants of the 1989 TMCA project with whom I spoke remembered activities they called “UNIFEM.” The participants recalled that a long time ago, people from the outside came in to help change the treatment and condition of women in the *campo*. They fondly remembered role-plays about women that some called “dramas,” “theaters,” or “socio-dramas.” People also remembered the “festivals” as the big events in which everyone from other communities came together in their sacred clothes to play their sacred music and dance.

Even though the women and men with whom I spoke understood the conditions of women in the *campo* and some men even acknowledged their *machismo*, many were confused about the “what the purpose of the project was” (Julio, personal communication, 2000) because “those in charge of the project did not clarify the objectives.” More than one community expressed a lack of clarity about the project goals. Some believed the purpose was to talk about the Baha’i Faith (Ximena, 2000, personal communication), and even one woman who was enlisted to assist “didn’t

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<sup>2</sup> The protocol within the administrative order of the Baha’i Faith gives authority to the NSA and their decisions have priority over individual actions.

understand really what was the purpose of the project until I got there (Jacinta, 2000, personal communication). In addition, there was confusion about money. One man said:

...the Baha'is understood it was a project that was auspicated or encouraged by the Baha'is and those who were not Baha'is thought it was a Baha'i project with a lot of money involved (Eugenio, 2000, personal communication).

Even the project coordinator acknowledged that "...from the beginning there was very much jealousy against myself from others because I was receiving money (O. Banks, personal communication, 2000). Some people, she said, even thought the money was used to build an addition to their house (O. Banks, personal communication, 2000).

These were actually the initial concerns of OSED when the project came before them for approval; OSED was "cautious and conservative" about accepting the project because money was involved (Hazelwood, personal communication, 2000).

### Suddenly, Things Changed

Initially, the women and men were quite happy when the project began because "God had finally paid some attention to them" (O. Banks, personal communication, 2000). The women wanted to learn "a lot regarding their children," "how to cook," "how to take pictures," "how to memorize prayers," and about "the equality of the man and the woman" (Women of Phoqonchi, personal communication, 2000). But:

"suddenly, the person in charge who at first made us very happy saying very nice things, suddenly when the people saw that she didn't do what she said, she become cold" (Lucia, personal communication, 2000).

The women and men who were trained to use the camera "did not practice.... because they (the implementers) took all the audio-visual equipment and did not keep their promise" (Women of Phoqonchi, personal communication, 2000). Eventually, the

Quechua women and men questioned the “rectitude of conduct” of the “people in charge” because they broke promises, publicly displayed “problems with their family” (Ximena, personal communication, 2000), rejected the food offered to them, (Florencia, personal communication, 2000), ignored the questions the people had about current changes in Bolivian laws, and “abandoned” communities. Over time, people in all the communities felt “betrayed,” “discouraged,” “deceived,” and “abandoned.”

To “recapture” these communities, the Baha’i s that work with the indigenous populations introduced a number of initiatives for women in the years following. These initiatives had similar goals and since the Quechua do not organize time in a linear fashion, it was difficult to assess the direct impacts of this development intervention.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, some of women and men with whom I spoke confused the 1989 TMCA project with other Baha’i sponsored gender and literacy projects. But, whether the 1989 TMCA project directly or indirectly influenced the Quechua women and men in rural Bolivia who participated in its activities, or whether Baha’i sponsored events, including the spiritual teachings of the Baha’i Faith, influenced their lives, changes in individual’s behavior and attitude towards gender and women’s status over the past ten years did occur.

#### Some Sustained Changes: Old Habits are Hard to Break

Ten years later, the three behaviors the BIC identified as gender shifts in all three of the 1989 TMCA implementations sites, Cameroon, Malaysia and Bolivia, were

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<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that although the 1989 TMCA project was organized through the Baha’i institutions, the project design intended to include members of the greater community. This study only interviewed members of the Baha’i community because those were the women and men I could find.

somewhat, but not consistently sustained. These were: increased consultation between woman and man in household affairs, increased participation of women in decision-making, and a reduction in alcoholism. But, attributing the results to the 1989 TMCA project would be difficult, these behaviors are integrated into the social fabric of Baha'i community life.

Increased Consultation: Getting Men to Help in the Home. A number of female participants for this study agreed that the 1989 TMCA project “taught (us) how to consult in the family” and to share in the sexual division of labor, such as “peeling the potatoes” and “helping with the children” (Ximena, personal communication, 2000). Men were taught “how to help (women) wash clothes, or to stay with the baby at home” (Ximena, personal communication, 2000). Even though most women agreed that these behaviors continued, one woman admitted, “The men never help! What is that going to do for the men? Even though they know their role. It’s not important for them to do this” (Jacinta, personal communication, 2000). Another woman from another community agreed that “...there was not a change in the men” then, or now (Women from Phoqonchi, personal communication, 2000).

I did not spend time inside people’s homes to observe these changes, I did, however, see the women in the kitchen, preparing, cooking and serving the food for *cursillos* or Baha'i special events. I also saw some women come into the activities and participate for short periods. I never saw men leave to work in the kitchen. But, during the breaks, everyone—men, women, youth and children—participated in peeling potatoes, making food preparation a community collaborative process. In addition, the

entire community was responsible for washing their own setting, however the women did 'oversee' the process.

Increased Participation but Numbers are Still Low. Women increased their activity outside the home in the past ten years. Whereas before "they didn't want to go out.... they were afraid and mostly stayed at home" (Florencia, personal communication, 2000), a concerted effort was made within the Baha'i community to encourage more women to attend *cursillos* and Baha'i events. One woman said, "Men and women participate in activities, men and women together," and another said, "... it is expected for women to participate." I was told frequently by different sources that more women have been elected to the LSAs and were also elected as delegates to attend the annual National Baha'i Convention in La Paz. Participation outside the Baha'i community increased, as told by one woman, "...also, in my community, organizations, like the *Sindicato*, elects women for secretaries or representatives" (Florencia, personal communication, 2000).

Even so, women's involvement was relatively small in comparison to men's. For example, during this research period, I observed fifteen women attendees at the National Convention as compared with the sixty males, and I was told this number had increased since the year before (H. Banks, personal communication, 2000).<sup>4</sup>

Sustained Reduction in Alcohol Use for Men and Related Behavior for Women. Women told me there was a continued reduction in alcohol related use over the past ten years. Before, "the majority of the women used to like dancing in the bars, now the women of Puka Puka don't go to the bars anymore (Florencia, 2000, personal

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<sup>4</sup> There are no actual figures of women's attendance in 1999, the year prior to field research. I was told by a number of people at this event that the number of women has increased "considerably."

communication). Also, the behaviors of Baha'is contrasted with the "other families" where "...the men walk in front of the women in other families."

...they drink a lot at parties, they get drunk and they hit their women. But, since we are Baha'is we do not do this because we don't drink. The families, who are not Baha'is, the Catholics for example, watch how the Baha'is are living their lives (Ximena, 2000, personal communication).

### Summary of Initial Findings

The "false starts" in the 1989 TMCA Bolivian implementation trickled down to the project participants. The two gaps in the implementation that led to confusion were due to the omission of the project briefing by the NSA of Bolivia and the unsuitability of the local project coordinator because of her lack of knowledge and experience about development and PAR philosophy. Ten years later, some shifts in gender behaviors that were learned in the 1989 TMCA project were sustained and some were not. Men and women alike returned to customary cultural patterns, but the teachings and activities of the Baha'i Faith continued to reinforce the equality of women and men, consultation as a communication tool, and the elimination of alcohol and violence, goals similar to those of the 1989 TMCA project.

### Unpredicted Results

#### The Next Generation: Education and Literacy in Young Women's Lives

The 1989 TMCA Gender and Development intervention was unique at the time because it called for the inclusion of men. Ten years later, this study found that another group for which the 1989 TMCA project was not necessarily intended, the young

girls—some still children—became, over time, the primary “recipients” or “beneficiaries” of gender work.

All of the eleven women I spoke with who participated in the 1989 TMCA project, including the project coordinator, had increased their literacy skills and educational capacity<sup>5</sup> within the past ten years or talked about having wanted to. Literacy was marked as learning to read and write in Quechua and to speak in Spanish; education represented formal enrollment in a school. Literacy represented “gaining a voice” and “learning to converse in Spanish” (Shoai, personal communication, 2000).

Eight of these eleven women were second-generation participants—young girls who accompanied their mothers or parents to the 1989 TMCA activities. Many of these women, like Florencia and Anamaria, from Puka Puka and Molle Punko, respectively, found educational opportunities outside their village in the urban areas and made goals to graduate from a university. Carmela, from Phoqonchi, became “literate,” in short-term literacy program established by her Baha'i community, and is presently raising a family. Maruja, who never did participate directly in the project, but did so indirectly by supporting her mother, also attends a university and made professional goals. Jacinta, Maruja's mother, did not attend school but helped to start a community effort where “the mothers' clubs taught you how to cook, any technical things like how to weave, to embroider” (Maruja, personal communication, 2000). Olga, the project coordinator, had a two-year teaching degree before her project responsibilities, and returned to complete the *licenciatura* (bachelor's degree).

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<sup>5</sup> To some, literacy was marked as learning to read and write in Quechua and to speak in Spanish, education represented formal enrollment in a school. To others, literacy represented “gaining a voice” and “learning to converse in Spanish.”

Not all of these girls initiated their own literacy efforts. For many, the men helped, indicating a change in their attitude and behavior. In fact, Florencia's sister-in-law, Ximena, who aided in her "escape," did not advance towards her own schooling, but her father did: "My step-father signed me up for the school" (Ximena, 2000, personal communication). Although some women could not, at the time of this research, actualize their formal education capacities, the volition to do so existed. One woman said, "I've always wanted to participate in a *cursillo* (workshop) and I like that. I've always wanted to go to school." In her mid-twenties, this woman has only one young child instead of several as would be expected for her age in the Quechua community. One older woman from Puka Puka, who is not able to attend school, but who has the support of her husband, is encouraging her young girls:

I am not getting literacy training (learning to read and write) but my children are now. My husband is encouraging me to read and write. But I don't know how to do it.

Another woman, who has seven children, the oldest of whom participated in the project and presently works in community health development said, "I want my children to get more educated. I also want to educate myself more" (Taquel, personal communication, 2000).

The majority of the "success" stories came from Puka Puka, the community that shortly after the project established a full-time school. A female member of the NSA, who was also called in as an additional consultant to help the local coordinator, said about these girls of Puka Puka:

There's a group of young women in that area who participated in that project when they were, about 14, 15 years old who are now outstanding literacy promoters, health promoters, Baha'i teachers. They are really in



the vanguard of their own communities development and their also out there working for the education of themselves and achieving much higher degree of education than is common, at all common, especially for girls (C. Shoai, 2000, personal communication).

Ximena summarized the “before” and “after” opportunities in Puka Puka:

...only the boys are put in school and high school and the girls are left out and they don't know anything, but now, there's a Baha'i high school and the girls and boys are both studying (Ximena, 2000, personal communication).

### Education: The Art or Decline of Civilization?

Why did the education for girls and women emerge as one of the most outstanding results of the 1989 TMCA project? First, the notion of the importance of education for girls and women, in particular, is stressed in the social principles of the Baha'i Faith and was reinforced from within the Baha'i community. Education is considered the path to personal enlightenment and collective transformation, and is the most effective instrument for the upliftment of the whole human race (Baha'u'llah, 1939).

Individuals are taught that families and communities benefit from systematically encouraging the education of the girl child because women's emancipation relies on universal education. Women's emancipation is directly linked with the reduction of violence and therefore, linked to the achievement of world peace. So emphatic is this principle of the importance of women's role in international relations that families and communities are taught to place greater importance on the education of girls than that of

boys.<sup>6</sup> What's more, the Baha'i Faith teaches that when the indigenous people of the world are "illuminated," they play a significant role in leading the world.

In the Western model of development, on the other hand, education is an apparatus of the state for planned, systematic modernization. These hegemonic influences erode community, local economy, and cultural experiences and "interpellate" students as cultural subjects for Bolivia's political, and "modern" national future.<sup>7</sup> Did these Western material notions of education influence these Quechua Baha'is?

For the women in this study, the notion of education was understood as a means for spiritual and social change. Florencia said,

"When women have more education they are more transformed. They would hit their children. They are now more respectful of their children and they are more respectful of themselves" (Florencia, personal communication, 2000).

Anamaria expressed the humiliation and embarrassment women feel when not listened to by men; education means having a voice, and being "respected by people" (Anamaria, personal communication, 2000). The "unequal relationship between the husband and the wife" influenced her "to come to the city and study." For Maruja, the

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<sup>6</sup> In a statement the BIC made to the 51st session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in 1995 on ending violence against women, the BIC emphasized the relationship between women's education and violence, a condition many women in this study spoke to:

"While economic disparity and legal inequality are known to contribute to incidents of violence against women, it is obvious that violence arises from ignorance - the failure to understand such fundamental realities as the oneness of the human race and the mistaken notion that force is the only honorable way to resolve conflicts. Education - moral, material and practical - is therefore not only a fundamental right but a practical necessity in today's world. Any attempt to curb societal violence that does not educate individuals to overcome gender prejudice will certainly fall short. At a time when illiteracy is increasing among women in the developing world and levels of learning are falling for both sexes in industrial societies, it is vitally important to reemphasize the role of education everywhere if violence against women is to be controlled" (BIC, 1995). Baha'i International Community (1995). "The Greatness Which Might Be Theirs: Ending Violence Against Women." A paper delivered to the 51<sup>st</sup> session of the Commission on Human Rights. Geneva, Switzerland.

<sup>7</sup> A post-structuralist term to signify a process by which an individual becomes a certain kind of subject, a subject of the state.

granddaughter of an Ancient Walker and who is a student of early childhood development, education is a spiritual activity and enables women to create “an environment everyone can benefit from.”

Basically, we were created in life to serve a power greater than ourselves. Then, in this way we are to serve humanity. I am studying education. It is so exciting. What I am learning about the stages of development in children, how they can be encouraged in their growth. Now, the physical aspects of childcare, taking care of the physical needs, giving them intellectual stimulation, feeding them properly, giving them stimulation, teaching them how they are going to memorize, are very important. The Baha’i Writings talk about the education of the child and the relationship with the mother. This is the environment everyone will benefit from. *Me encanta Freire* (I really like Freire) (Maruja, personal communication, 2000).

For these women, education represented service to humankind, not reproduction of new subjects for the state. Education, in this view, does not erode community, the local economy, and indigenous culture. For these women, education is the art of civilization.

With the exception of three men, two whom I interviewed and one whose wife I interviewed, I learned of no men who increased their education in exactly the same way as the women over the past ten years, beyond the usual opportunities that are more available to them.<sup>8</sup> In the case of these three men, one of whom does wear his village’s traditional dress, they received recognition in public places, such as one on an international book cover, another on the Internet, and the last professionally, as a health development “expert.” Interestingly, the representation of their achievements was more

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<sup>8</sup> Because I focused in this study mostly on the women, I asked few questions about the educational pursuits of the men within the past 10 years. It was evident from the workshops I conducted for these communities in my PAR capacity, that a number of men held pencils and wrote in notebooks, whereas I did not observe any women to do so. It is possible that more men increased their education, however, I have only direct knowledge of these three men I address here.

prominent and public than those of the women whose efforts are still located in the private sphere.

### The Costs of Education: Urban Migration and Threats to Identity

What were the costs to individuals and communities to acquire education since the rural areas were unequipped to provide the young girls with the resources they desired? To attain a level of education higher than what is available in their smaller villages, most of these girls migrated to the cities where they were invited to live with other Baha'is where they worked as *empleadas* (domestic workers) in the day and students at night. In addition to increasing their workload, the girls were threatened by the values of the city, which exerted its influence on young girls:

(When young girls go to the city to study) they lose their traditional values and they don't replace them with anything and (they) become very vulnerable to all the dangers of urban society, prostitution, violence, drug abuse" (E. Anelo, 2000, personal communication).

To different degrees, these women resisted the influences of the city, however, by changing their dress, either to be treated humanely in schools or to avoid sexual harassment. In addition, the young women I met, remained actively involved in their new Baha'i communities in the urban centers.

What are the consequences of changing dress on identity? Florencia was the first and only woman to completely transform her appearance. Maruja appeared to comfortably reside in the "borderlands," wearing her hair in braids with the skirt one day and loose hair with pants another. Anamaria and the others continued to wear their *polleras*, but have experimented with "U.S. clothes."

Florencia and Maruja have become role models for other young women to emulate. For these women, their identity as Indian remained firm and dress was seen as just an outward manifestation and didn't change their Indian-ness. Their worldview as "world citizen" was added to their Indian identity and helped these women resist the influences of the city and helped maintain their sense of self despite their place.

### Summary of Unexpected Changes

The greatest gains from the 1989 TMCA project were found in the education efforts of young women. Even those who didn't attain a higher level of formal school, encouraged their daughters. Men also encouraged the education of their daughters. For these Quechua Baha'is, education was the means for service and to improve and sustain community.

### 1989 TMCA Influences on Community: Contradictions Between GAD Success and Community Sustainability

#### Introduction

Individual change cannot be viewed out of the context of community change and the dynamic relationship created between the two. Systems increase in complexity over time and behave differently for communities than for individuals. Individuals change more quickly than do communities. And, just as individuals are not monolithic, neither are communities. Additional factors, such as gender, the specificities of individuals, and the particulars of the environment influenced Quechua women to change differently, as well as the men and their communities. For example, while many women migrated to the

city for school, others stayed to build the community. Some men continue to consult daily with their wives regarding household tasks. Others “have forgotten” (Jacinta, personal communication, 2000). The spiritual capacity of one community enabled it to rise above its environment’s limitations to take steps to plan for its sustainability, while at the time of this research, other communities were struggling for their survival. But, for all the communities, women’s actions towards their own literacy and education was the leverage point that got the attention of the community.

The 1989 TMCA project disclosed a double bind for Gender and Development and community sustainability. Increased education emerged as an indicator for improving women’s status, which in the rural areas, stimulated migration to urban centers. The “dangers of the city” placed young indigenous females at risk and drained the rural regions of, in this case study, its women. A success for GAD could mean a failure for the community. If women “succeed” in attaining GAD goals without attending to future of their community, they contribute to the “vanishing ethnoscape.”

But, within the context of the Baha’i approach to social and economic development, however, this bind paradoxically strengthened one community. This community asked their young women who left to promise to study for the community and to promise to return. Seeing the writing on the wall, the same community made additional plans for its survival vis-à-vis social and economic development. Although a different community was still grappling with its survival, its vision for its future remained strong.

Puka Puka: Resisting the Exodus so the “Children Don’t Stay in the City”

When the 1989 UNIFEM/BIC “Traditional Media as Change Agent” expanded to communities beyond Phoqonchi, the Baha’i community in Puka Puka was beginning to increase. The 1989 TMCA project coincided with a number of other initiatives sponsored by the Bolivian Baha’i community, such as the *cursillos* and literacy efforts, to increase women’s participation in deepening events and to promote the importance and equality of women.

A number of strong, young girls arose to serve as *maestras viajeras* (travel teachers) who “started teaching about the Baha’i Faith, but with the idea of the equality of the men and women” (Florencia, 2000, personal communication). Since traveling girls and women in the *campo* was seen as unusual at that time, these girls who traveled alone, on foot or by bus, to Sucre and throughout the *campo* were considered trailblazers, pioneers. Over time, as these girls chose to receive more education, they migrated from the community to the urban areas of Sucre and Cochabamba.

Meanwhile, as more men enrolled as Baha’is and other concerns in family life shifted, such as alcohol and domestic violence, eighty of the small community of 100 became Baha’is. The LSA adopted a goal of establishing an elementary school that would add one new grade each year until high school. Although the government pays a portion of the salaries of its teachers, the school is essentially a social and economic development project of the LSA in Puka Puka. But, the school, most agreed, “was not a result of the project” (Barea, personal communication, 2000).

Puka Puka’s struggles to resist the exodus are common experiences, conflicts and tensions for individuals, communities, and cultures in transition to the “modern” as seen

in the context of modernization. But, as community came to realize the effects of the young girls' exodus on the sustainability of their community, the LSA made a policy to encourage the girls' education but asked for their promise to study for the community and to return to teach others what they had learned. Ten years later, none of the women have returned, but the community believes they will:

The community thinks she (Florencia) is going to return because the Local Spiritual Assembly always says that when a member of the Baha'i community leaves they should go to study and they should return to their community to teach what they learn. They say the girls are studying for their community, to serve their community (Ximena, 2000, personal communication).

In her *testimonio*, Sadai conveyed the importance of making the rural community viable in order for the youth to stay and for the community to thrive. To sustain the rural Andean villages, she said, "jobs with specific skills, like mechanics, carpentry, seamstresses, engineering, and teachers" would give the youth "some work in their own community so that they wouldn't have to go to the city" (Sadai, personal communication, 2000). But, Bolivia's attempt to make the "backward" become "modern" through urbanization works counter to the vision of the future held by Sadai and her community.

#### Phoqonchi: A Vanishing Ethnoscape?

One of the women from Phoqonchi said to me, "Almost all of our community has left for the city to find a better way of life." Like Puka Puka, a number of young women from this community are studying in the urban center. But unlike Puka Puka, the population of Phoqonchi decreased in the past ten years once community members were no longer able to sustain themselves within the current environment. Families moved permanently to other locales or traveled to work in more fertile agricultural areas for a



portion of the year. When I visited the community, there were only two families present and “the others” were to return after the harvest<sup>9</sup>

Some of the women and men with whom I spoke referred to Phoqonchi as “*muerto*” (dead) and attributed the loss of the community to the negative influences of the 1989 TMCA project I was told the only reason the Assembly still functions was because someone “sent my spiritual God-children who went to work with that community” (Ortega, personal communication, 2000).<sup>10</sup>

Ten years later, those who remained in the community struggle to maintain its goals and visions so that the community does not disappear. At the time of this research, the men identified the need for a school, health care services and a community meeting hall where people could “study the family and improve our knowledge and wisdom” (Julio, personal communication, 2000).

Was Phoqonchi, a community with a high need for material assistance, the best choice for a development project aimed to deliver non-tangible results in gender change? This study found contradictions in the memories and perceptions of people involved in the early stages of the implementation about how this community was selected as the first site.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> While it was unknown how many returned. At least nine adults must have claimed Phoqonchi as their primary residence because nine residents over the age of 21 are required to live in the local community jurisdiction to constitute the Assembly. The election for reforming each LSA occurs on April 21 of each year. If nine adult Baha'is cannot form the LSA, the LSA is lost.

<sup>10</sup> In the event an LSA is in jeopardy of not reforming on April 21, frequently another Baha'i might move into the community to “save” the Assembly. This comment refers to an individual to whom another nurtured in their spiritual journey, although the term “god-child” is a hold-over from Christian culture and is a term rarely used in the Baha'i Faith.

<sup>11</sup> Discussion about Phoqonchi's selection is addressed earlier. To restate, members of the National Spiritual Assembly recall that the Phoqonchi LSA expressed interest and was selected because it had a strong Assembly. The husband of the local coordinator, on the other hand, remembered that Phoqonchi was selected “because they didn't want anything.” He also said that they intended to meet with the

One man who served at the Baha'i World Center for the Office of Social and Economic Development (OSED) when this office reviewed the 1989 TMCA proposal had been living in Bolivia for about five years and was interviewed for this study. He said:

Santa Cruz has very strong Baha'i community and it is a very poor barrio. That might have been a reasonable choice because it has done a lot of teaching work and a lot of deepening work. There are a lot of very active youth there. They are aware of trying to advance society, the Local Spiritual Assembly in Santa Cruz is also very strong, it has very capable people, it has access to NUR University and various resources, literacy programs, leadership programs that could have been used and adapted. I think it could have been successfully carried out there (Hazelwood, personal communication, 2000).

On the other hand, one of the outside consultants who was brought in to assist the local project coordinator said:

...when you go there and you see people are barely surviving... But, at the same time, this issue (of women's equality) is so crucial and can work in any society, one's with the greatest difficulties or the most sophisticated. Yes, it's like a contradiction but at the same time, yes, they need this. I'll give you a practical example. You know, when we were talking with the people and asking, "What were some of the most major necessities that you have," at the beginning only the men were talking. The men said, "we need a road because we really are isolated." But, when the women felt more comfortable, their needs were completely different They said health, schools. So, that exemplifies the importance of the implementation of this principle, even in these societies that live on the edge.

Other rural communities, such as those in closer proximity to a LSA with knowledge or experience of grassroots development, for example, might have been a better selection for a pilot study.

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community of Poroma, but that "we were on the way back from having a flat tire and we decided to investigate Phoqonchi as a possibility because we couldn't get to Poroma" (H. Banks, personal communication, 2000).

### “Abandoned” Angostura

Like Phoqonchi, Angostura is no longer the thriving Baha’i community it once was. Because I was only able to locate one woman, it is not known how many women and men left Angostura, nor how many people were still in the community who had participated in the 1989 TMCA. According to the women I did speak with, “UNIFEM” generated considerable activity about “the role of women,” where every one, “even grandparents” participated. This woman told me, “Now, there is nothing,...it was destroyed”:

the people realize something....but I don’t know exactly what the reason is for why activities stopped happening after this project But maybe people realized something but I don’t know what it is (Jania, personal communication, 2000).

There are more questions about what actually happened in Angostura than there are answers; assumedly, the funding ran out and a proposal to extend the project was rejected by OSED.<sup>12</sup> The situation ten years later demonstrated, how through the eyes of the people for whom the development is intended, the perception of abandonment and bewilderment can be blamed on the local, or Southern NGOs that collaborate with international donor agencies.

### Sucre: The White Colonial City

Sucre was only involved in so much as the Baha’i *Sede* was used as the site for *cursillos* and Sucre was where the local project coordinator lived. A lawyer from Sucre

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<sup>12</sup> The local coordinators requested funding from OSED to continue the project but were denied funding and the activities were encouraged to continue as part of the daily Baha’i activities. The sensed abandonment indicates these events, at least in the same way, ceased.

and a member of the Sucre LSA during the project implementation, who had since moved to La Paz, learned of my research while in Sucre and contacted me to talk about her knowledge of the 1989 TMCA implementation. She wanted me to know that during the years of the implementation, “secrecy and jealousy” crept into the Sucre LSA and into the Baha’i community from “those in charge” (Barea, personal communication, 2000). The relevance of this information is instructive to understand the social dynamics in a community when money is involved and when some individuals are “appointed” to coordinate a development project in a poor country. It is not known whether this situation would happen in all cases within or outside the Baha’i community. It is also not known how these forces influenced the Baha’i community of Sucre ten years later, except that women and men in the Sucre community insinuated that the community is “different” today and I observed a lingering unease whenever I talked about the project with some members of this community.

Tallawanka: “Still Negative”

...but the people from Tallawanka didn’t know what was going on because they weren’t very active. Later on, I’ve heard that this community, Tallawanka, is still negative but they have influenced the other community of Ankamaripanka (O. Banks, personal communication, 2000).

Tallawanka was the only community I did not visit, and I did not talk with anyone from this community. Every effort I made to visit this community with my translator and driver failed. Once I pieced together fragments of interview statements with my observations of personal responses about this community with regards to the 1989 TMCA

event, I realized something “unspeakable” (Ortega, personal communication, 2000) had happened in Tallawanka. I learned that:

the driver raped one of the participants that went with her from the city. Everyone hid it, no one knows about it The driver raped the girl from Sucre. He is now in jail but not because of that, for something else (O. Banks, personal communication, 2000).

The event was not reported because, according to the project coordinator, “she (the Project Director) was not too happy with me and she always criticized me and I was afraid she would criticize me on that too” (O. Banks, personal communication, 2000). Later, I was also told the name of the perpetrator and the victim. The perpetrator could have been a key informant for this study because he filmed the project activities, even though the women were to have been responsible. But, he was in prison. Also, I learned that the victim was my translator’s sister and was also very close to my driver, which could account for why neither of them were available on the days we planned to travel to this community. Additionally, the mother of the perpetrator was the wife of one of the first Ancient Walkers and was not present at any of the Sucre Baha’i community events, except for the first event I attended.

Oddly, one final attempt to get to Tallawanka with my driver and my translator coincided with a trip the local project coordinator and her family planned to Tallawanka. My driver informed me of this ‘coincidence’ the day we were to leave and advised against our visit. Although it is not known, I believed my trip to meet the people of Tallawanka and talk about their experiences of the 1989 TMCA project was intentionally side railed.

Even though I didn’t visit Tallawanka, I learned some information about the 1989 TMCA project that contextualizes more of the complexities of the project. First, I was

enraged that, paradoxically, an incident of violence against a woman was not only committed during the implementation but that the attack was covered up. So as to not collude in an act of violence against a woman and to not perpetuate the silence enshrouding the event, I exposed the rape to the Project Director, who was working on location in Turkey during the research period, via e-communication. Secondly, I was forced, once again, to choose my allegiances. Whereas I probed the project coordinator to learn more about what actually happened ten years ago, I backed off from the mystery surrounding Tallawanka with the Quechua participants. Consequently, I sacrificed the research in Tallawanka out of respect for the deeply personal privacies of the Quechua people I interviewed. I did, however, notice my translator's nephew—a little boy who played and prayed at Baha'i social events with his mother, but no father, and who was loved and revered by the community.

### Quechua Women and Men Produce Knowledge about GAD to Inform Policy Makers

#### Theorizing About Gender

The women participants who left their communities to study or who stayed in their villages, made contributions to the field of Gender and Development and contextualized development *as* personal and as that which starts at home (Marchand, 1995). By sharing their life experiences, some painful and others joyous, they imparted knowledge about what it means to be rural indigenous women and they became full participants in GAD discourse. I found that their activities, as first-time learners and as graduates in formal educational settings and/or as champions for sustaining the rural community, constituted feminist work and movement building. Although these women

would not call themselves feminists by Western standards, their views, practices and expertise illustrated an active stance in theorizing about gender specific interests and women's practical needs in Latin America.

The men also contributed to producing knowledge about Gender and Development, but their stories centered outside the home and were located in history. The men talked about *machismo*—negative gender attitudes and the mistreatment of women—as survival strategies learned at conquest from the Spaniards and reproduced within the community through “the culture of the colonizers.” Whereas the women personalized development, development was politicized for the men.

#### WAD: An Approach That Won't Work

The “women-only” WAD projects that had become a popular alternative to the failing WID programs was not an appropriate approach with the rural Quechua for three reasons. First, had the 1989 TMCA project excluded men, the project coordinator suggested the project may have been ignored by the men, and therefore the community. “Men,” she said, “don't usually pay attention to what they are taught, but if you include women, he's listening” (O. Banks, 2000, personal communication). Secondly, the men were threatened by (Western) feminist notions they believed would lead to the break-up of the family. What's more, the women did not want to change alone. Change, people said, was for both women and men:

““UNIFEM” wasn't making the women better than the men, just trying to make them (the women) understand to support their husbands and the husbands were asked to support their wives in the activities (O. Banks, 2000, personal communication).

Including Men in GAD: An Approach Using Pachamama and Pachapapa Complementarity

Here in Bolivia, particularly where the woman is mostly at a disadvantage, the woman must be integrated in development. This is for me the development of gender, (to include) women who are disadvantaged to create the equilibrium (Eugenio, personal communication, 2000,).

I don't know exactly from when this *machismo* was created here in Latin America, but surely I still have *machismo* in me and unconsciously at times and I don't mean to (S. Ortega, personal communication, 2000,).

I don't want to change alone I wanted the whole family to change (O. Banks, personal communication, 2000).

The goals of the GAD tradition to shift unequal gender relations are appropriate for the rural indigenous Baha'i communities in Bolivia, and according to these people, they believe the greater community can learn from these approaches as well. The women and men with whom I spoke explained "women's condition" as a result of old "mental models," a systems term learned at the *cursillos*, and understood these negative models as attitudes and behaviors learned during colonization about the superiority of men and about women's internalized beliefs of inferiority.

The BIC idea of including men in a dialogue was appropriate and congruent with the Baha'i and Quechua spiritual and cultural context. In the first place, as Baha'is, these Quechua were already exposed to the philosophical teachings about the equality of women and men from the Baha'i Faith. These teachings not only taught equality but also that men are kept down by their own collusion in the unjust system:

...The world of humanity has two wings—one is women and the other men. Not until both wings are equally developed can the bird fly. Should one wing remain weak, flight is impossible ('Abdul-Baha', p. 302).

As long as women are prevented from attaining their highest possibilities, so long will men be unable to achieve the greatness which might be theirs."



From the perspective of Quechua cosmology, the idea of partnership matches the Andean complementary forces of Pacha Mama, the Earth and Pacha Papa, the Sun.<sup>13</sup> Like the Chinese yin and yang, neither the feminine earth nor the masculine sun dominate the other, rather both work together in harmony.

#### Family and Gender: Quechua Indians Suggest a New Approach

The women and men with whom I spoke suggested a new approach for GAD in the rural areas with indigenous people—a family approach; the success of which was evidenced in the outstanding changes in the young girls who participated in the 1989 TMCA from the sidelines.

Interestingly, GAD literature omits a discussion of the future generation. Children and youth are rarely, if ever, mentioned in development literature, except in economic terms and within the context of women's role as reproducers. Children and youth tend to be the population most educated in rural communities; therefore they have the capacity to teach their parents about gender while they become gender learners at the same time. This research revealed that youth (and children) were the most receptive "beneficiaries" and "recipients" of gender-based development. Just as the early economic development practices "bypassed" women, GAD literature bypassed youth and children.

However, in Bolivia, the children and youth are the population most educated in rural communities; therefore they have the capacity to teach their parents about gender

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<sup>13</sup> One interpretation of this balance suggests that the women's qualities of "timidity," "shyness," and "silence" is like Pacha Mama, the Earth is silent as compared with men's outward activity (Aguiló, 1983). Another view that draws on Marxist ideology suggests the indigenous woman's silence is a deliberate form of anonymity that compliments the indigenous men's struggle for justice in the (neo)colonial world (Cusicanqui, 1990, p. 178).

while they become gender learners. As Jacinta said, "...the children can teach the parents. Even if the parents don't have the understanding, the children do and they can help their parents change (Jacinta, personal communication, 2000).

#### The Participants' Evaluation of "Traditional Media as Change Agent"

"Communities would like to have another project similar to this one but that it should be administered by a Local Spiritual Assembly"(Eugenio, 2000, personal communication)

The 1989 TMCA project design called for it to be administered under the auspices of the Baha'i Local Spiritual Assembly. An approach that placed the locus of power for change with community-based efforts at the village level is consistent with community environmental action strategies. Building the local institutional capacity was also consistent with the goals of Baha'i social and economic development, as well as the organizational structure of the Andean *ayllu* system of local self-governance.

The LSA of Phoqonchi started to administer the 1989 project. But, this study found that participants perceived the:

personnel, the people who were in charge of this project, as having forced their ideas on people, tried to impose what they wanted to do without taking into account the local community structure or institutions. (They) lacked consideration of the local institution.... They didn't let them have their opinions (Eugenio, personal communication, 2000).

And, apparently, there was discussion in one community about ending the project "some members of the community suggested that instead of the project continuing, they wanted to suspend the project" (Eugenio, 2000, personal communication).

However, a number of men stated that they "would like to have another project similar to this one." If the 1989 TMCA project, or one similar, were to be readministered

in Bolivia, many participants wanted the LSA to have more autonomy: “it should be administered by a Local Spiritual Assembly” (Eugenio, 2000, personal communication). Women and men agreed that the liaison, or coordinator, between the local, national and international level “should be selected from within the community”:

The project was very nice. Those who directed the project needed to be in the community more. Maybe those of us who live in the *campo* could manage the project. We could teach them how to run the project in the *campo* because those who don’t live here don’t know what life is like here. They are not accustomed to the food, the road, the beds. Those are my suggestions (Ximena, 2000, personal communication).

One man suggested that there should a monitoring system to evaluate progress through periodic evaluations to learn “if the project design matches the project implementation.” This individual, he said, should be from outside the community.

### Project or Program?

Development, like the conquest of the Spaniards, left an indelible mark in Latin America. The participants of the 1989 TMCA project recommended that if this approach were to continue, because of the historic association of the term “project,” it should change its name from a “project” to a “program” to have greater influence with the communities for which it served. One man said that the “word ‘project’ implies a lot of money and (people) think that the coordinators of this project receive a lot of money“ (Eugenio, personal communication, 2000).

The project coordinator of the Cameroon site, who was interviewed for this study, used the word “program” thirteen times in a two-hour interview to describe the 1989 TMCA project. The word “project” was only used in two sentences:

People have misconceptions about whenever they hear “project” and because particularly that this project didn’t have any physical achievement for many people it was disillusioning. People would say, “well, what you are talking about....where is the project?” (O. Banks, 2001, personal communication).

In two 2-hour interviews with the Bolivian project coordinator, the word “money” was mentioned fifteen times, unsolicited, with regards to people’s perceptions of her intentions. For example:

From the beginning there was very much jealousy against myself from others because I was receiving money. If I started the project again, I wouldn’t receive money. I’m sorry about it. That’s why we kept going for two more years. That’s what we’ve learned as a family. If I did another project, I’d do it with my own funds. There was lots and lots of jealous from the communities, they would get mad and say you’re the coordinator, and so on (O. Banks, 2000, personal communication).

To summarize, the participants of the 1989 TMCA project were receptive to further implementations, but with stronger involvement of the LSA. They would like the coordinator to come from the community, a monitoring system, and the word “program” to replace “project.”

#### Know the “Indian Way” and “Listen to Teach”

The design of the “Traditional Media as Change Agent” project was intended for replication in any cultural context using PAR methods, the Baha’i philosophy, and the Baha’i approach to social and economic development. The Cameroon and Malaysian implementation experienced greater success than did Bolivia, according to the documentation. Development theorists have long known the reproducibility of modernization methods in Latin America is different from the Africa and Asia context

because of Latin America's particular history.<sup>14</sup> Specifically in Bolivia, where the indigenous were released from serfdom only 50 years before, barely a generation ago, where new reform rules and agrarian and educational laws have been introduced constantly, Indians have lost history and yet are confused about the new rules and laws. Whereas before the indigenous people had no voice in decision-making, popular participation laws gives more responsibility to the local community:

...if you are to have any project in Bolivia you must consider new political administration. The *Prefecto* is the main authority in all nine departments of Bolivia. The *Prefecto* gives money to the *Alcalde* who are elected by people in the community, they are members of *corregidores*, the principle authority in a small community. Octavio is the *dirigente*, elected by citizens of that place according to the Ley de Participacion Popular and the Ley Decentralizacion Administrativa de 1995-1997. Now, according to those special rules...the special responsibility of that leader must plan education, health services, about the real necessities of the communities, land rights. And, according to this law, women can participate asking about real problems of health services, etc. Everyone must give their own opinions.

But, when participants of the 1989 TMCA project asked the project coordinator "particular questions" about these new laws, such as the law about the agrarian reform, they were told "the law doesn't concern us, we are Baha'is" (Eugenio, 2000, personal communication). Although the Baha'i vision of change is a systemic and systematic organic process that rebuilds community from the grassroots, and its vision of oneness emphasizes unity and diversity, this study found that when working with indigenous communities in Bolivia, it is important to respect and honor the "Indian way."

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<sup>14</sup> Valenzuela and Valenzuela (1981) suggest development specialists in modernization theory were unable to make strong links between the Spanish Third World and Europe since Latin America countries gained independence in the early 1800s, so their European ties to the West are greater than on other continents. Solutions to this challenge was the "Mediterranean ethos" which Marchand (1995) says explained the "lazy, antidemocratic, backwardness" J. Samuel Valenzuela and Arturo Valenzuela, "Modernization and Dependency: Alternative Perspectives in the Study of Latin American Underdevelopment," *Comparative Politics*, July 1978, 10 (4):535-52.

Withholding information is particularly reminiscent of the Spaniards and modernization practices. Because Andean history is so muddled, one participant said, “Let people learn the history of their ancestors.” Not doing this “caused disharmony” (Ortega, personal communication, 2000).

The national reality in Bolivia aims to produce “citizens” while weakening the ethnic identities. The indigenous Baha’is believe the Baha’i Faith “gives back to the Indians what the Spaniards took away” (E. Anelo, 2000, personal communication). Withholding information about rules and laws that influence the daily lives of Indian people was inconsistent with a religion whose organizing principles are founded on the fundamental principle of the “oneness of humankind” and whose teachings promote the advancement of the indigenous populations.

“Knowing the Indian way” is not an act of banal patronization, nor can it be contrived. Ideas about the indigenous people, such as those expressed in the following narratives given by the project coordinator’s husband, are manifested in actions and were perceived by the Quechua participants of this study:

...these people don’t have much stimulation. They eat a very kind of mundane diet every day. Their work doesn’t change much from day to day much. They have the heavy seasons for planting and harvesting. They have very few pleasures. They like everything you give them, but they misuse them.

Because people are not ready to begin even that (building capacities), they have to begin first (to think), the first step is learning to think and most of them don’t.

(life in the *campo*) is so understimulating that its incredible to think about capacitating. First you have to think about thinking (H. Banks, personal communication, 2000).

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The Quechua produced knowledge about how they would like to be treated by development personnel. They would like their way of life understood, their food accepted and their questions answered. Simply, “a person has to have love and respect for the Indians” (Ortega, personal communication, 2000). Their approaches are participatory, historic and through story, not “teacher style: lecture and talk”:

The indigenous culture is to ask what they need. It is more participatory. First, ask: What are your problems, necessities? Who do you think can help you resolve these problems? Later, deepen on spiritual truths, look to the writings of Baha’u’llah about how to resolve these problems. All development and all themes of development must use consultation with the people. You have to listen to teach. The indigenous people tell stories, they have their prophecies and the return of their Prophets. The National Spiritual Assembly didn’t support this style. They didn’t agree about how important it is to look at the histories.

The Action Component of PAR: Animating Social and Economic Development (SED) with Quechua Indians<sup>15</sup>

Introduction to the PAR Situation

In addition to using feminist approaches to PAR to modulate how I established relationships, conducted interviews, and analyzed data, which included seeing data through a gender lens, I used these approaches to stimulate social action. Although I did not know exactly how PAR would reveal itself before I arrived in the field, I knew that

social action opportunities do reveal themselves. As I explained in the Methods chapter, I promised the LSA of Sucre to offer service to communities. Although I provided technical assistance to communities I visited, I was still conducting research. Two weeks before I was scheduled to depart Bolivia, I facilitated two weekend *cursillos* at the Baha'i *Sede* in Sucre for the Sucre Baha'i community and for the indigenous Regional Council. The day before I left "there" for "here," I got back in that old, rusty truck that for three months had taken me to the rural villages and met with the village elders, Local Spiritual Assembly members, and the teachers of Puka Puka by the young *amauta* of Puka Puka to provided a third session on grassroots strategic planning action in response to an invitation to "animate" a development process for (see: Chapter 3 Methods, p. 37).

Twenty-five women, men and youth from the Sucre community attended the first *cursillo* in mid June, 2000. The following weekend, about thirty-five Quechua Baha'i men and about ten women from at least ten dispersed, rural communities throughout the Chuquisaca region attended the second *cursillo*. Both workshops in Sucre were highly interactive and participatory. I used materials in Spanish,<sup>15</sup> which were copied to a flip chart, provided hand-outs, and used a Spanish-English translator for support. For the Indigenous Regional Council, I spoke through an English, Spanish and Quechua

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<sup>15</sup> There are various methods to social and economic development in the Baha'i community. In this setting, I used a program developed by The Mottahedeh Development Services "Developing Patterns of Community Life" (1999). The training helps communities "to develop a vision and action plan to develop truly distinctive qualities of community life" (p. 7) and is rooted in the Baha'i assumptions that service to humankind is the highest form of worship. SED takes many forms on a continuum, from complex programs that require larger participation and extensive funding, such as the establishment of university, to more simple, short-term efforts, such as quick, small relief projects. In between, are advocacy type projects that meet fairly regularly, such as a parent training, ESL classes, or refugee women's health care. SED projects are inspired by individual initiative or have the institutional commitment and ownership of the local or national Assemblies.

<sup>16</sup> The only Spanish translation for the training manual in the world just so happened to be filed in the hard drive of one of the Sucre community members who was contracted by the foundation to translate for publication these materials.



translator. I worked with Sabino, my driver, and Maruja, my translator, to translated materials from Spanish into Quechua. We wrote information on large sheets of chart paper that my Spanish-Quechua translator read for the non-readers in the group. For the third session, I improvised with a stub of chalk on a board in a potato storage hut with about twenty community members, only two of whom were women, and a Spanish and Quechua translator.

Of these three training situations, I only describe the two experiences that directly involved the women and men from the indigenous communities: the Regional Council and the Puka Puka community.

#### Session 1: Animating SED with the Indigenous Regional Council of Chuquisaca

##### The Participants

For some, travel to Sucre required a full day's journey by truck or jeep. Once at the Sucre Baha'i *Sede*, men and women slept in the male and female dormitories designed for the indigenous people and were provided meals and outdoor sanitation facilities. In exchange, the people offered potatoes, other crops, or service as donation. With the exception of the Quechua who now lived in Sucre, all the women and men wore clothing of their particular region. The women did not wear the urban *pollera* and most of the men did not wear Western dress, as they do in the cities. Because there were a number of Chuquisaca villages represented, the style and color of woven *mantas* (shawls or scarves) and the hats of the participants varied greatly. Communities were represented by a small contingency of men, or, in some cases, a household, including the small children, and in one case, a woman alone.

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Nine of the participants were members of the indigenous Regional Council, however, I never learned which women and men sat on that committee, except for the lone woman. A few of the elder men were *ancianos caminates* whose names I recognized from the oral stories people told. Many of those I had interviewed for this study from Phoqonchi and Puka Puka were present, including the young *amauta* Tata Octavio Limachi. I was in the presence of many of the most honorable and respected Baha'i indigenous women and men from the Chuquisaca department (Figure 14).

Figure 14  
Conducting Participatory Action Research with the Chuquisaca Regional Council  
in Sucre, Bolivia



Preparation for the Social and Economic Development Process with a Quechua Community. Although I had trained to facilitate this SED process with communities in the U.S. and had conducted various professional workshops for a wide range of audiences at “home” on other topics, I had never offered development assistance nor had I “animated” a PAR process, especially for 35 indigenous people in two languages away from my own. As I mentally and spiritually prepared for the *cursillo*, I weighed the

development literature and Natural Resource land-use theory I consumed prior to dissertation study on one hand, and postmodern feminist and development studies literature of “alternatives” on the other. Alone, without text, without committee, and without other English speakers with whom to process, I felt like the Tai Chi master who, having studied for a lifetime, empties self of all acquired knowledge. I relied on what I knew best, my deep intuitive sense of rightness, not the Western moral sense of rightness, but the human—mind, body, and soul as one—sense of rightness.

As the Regional Council members and others entered the large, cold room to find a seat on chairs or on make-shift benches, I imagined sitting between World Bank president Jim Wolfensohn and development writer Majid Rahnema, each telling the other how to best proceed in this PAR development matter. I tried to forget the lingering sore throat and the gnawing stomach ache I learned to live with for three months and told Jim and Majid that I’d have to do it my way.

Envisioning the Future of the *Campo* Ten Years from Now. The members of the Regional Council and others from the Chuquisaca department sat in a circle. My English-Spanish translator, my Spanish-Quechua translator, and I sat towards the front of the circle next to a chalkboard. Babies slept in mothers’ arms and small children scurried from mother to father. The six young women sat closest to me; one woman sat with her husband, and the woman traveling solo sat among the men. About seven men held notebooks and pencils. The gathering opened with prayers spoken in Quechua, Spanish and English. I opened my mouth and these words came out:

Development, like planting potatoes, is not just a single event. The end result might be a good bowl of soup or selling potatoes in the *mercado*, but many people had to come together first and think about where we should plant, till the ground, plant the seed, water the plant and harvest the potato. SED

projects are a collective action by an entire community with a shared vision of service to others, but without a plan of action that involves the whole community, we can't yield a large crop of potatoes. SED projects are of two kinds, individual initiative or LSA sponsored.....

To an engaged, captive audience, I continued with the training sequence. First, I talked about the distinct pattern of Baha'i community life through the use of analogy—I described the variety of color textile and design in woven hats and shawls worn by the women and men participants and drew connections to the distinguishing character of Baha'is. Then, I emphasized the application of spiritual principles from the Baha'i Writings, which the participants identified, and I called upon people's previous experiences with their community's SED efforts in small group discussions, which were then shared with the larger group. I conveyed excitement for the participants' organizing efforts and acknowledge them as the "experts" of their own development.

After a short break of hot, overly sugared tea and bread rolls, we resumed with the heart of the SED approach, the dynamic ten step process. Using the model we rewrote in Quechua on large newsprint, I spoke in English:

One of the goals of SED from a Baha'i perspective is to encourage self-sufficiency at the community, grassroots level. Projects that come in from the outside, they made do wonderful things for a year or two but when they leave the community has not developed the capacity or built the skills to sustain the project on their own. These steps encourage self-sufficiency and self-reliance at the community level.

Eventually, my Quechua translator conveyed the concerns raised by the men that without *la plata* (the money) to carry out the vision and plan of the community, projects can't succeed. The capacities to create a project lie within the potential of the community, the men said, but *la plata* is missing. My Spanish translator, who works for PLAN International, interrupted to give her commentary. She described how, without the

capacities of the community, all projects, including those funded and implemented by NGOs like PLAN, will “fail, because one day, we leave.” In Spanish and Quechua, a lively in-depth discussion about NGOs and funding ensued, but the dialogue was not translated back into English. Although I understood the substance of the discussion, more was happening between the participants and my translator, an NGO employee whose agency funds school and housing construction in some of these communities. I took control of the conversation and turned the discussion back to the goals of the workshop. As I might have done with students in my classroom, I stated that the discussion about the role of NGOs and international development agencies within indigenous communities in rural regions is a very important discussion, economically, politically and socially, but I encouraged the discussion to continue during lunch, during breaks, and at this time I wanted to return to the ten-step SED process.

Following the noon meal of a bowl of rice, potatoes, *aji*, and fried egg, I proceeded to explain the large group-envisioning project, my own contribution to this training program.<sup>17</sup> I asked women and men to get comfortable, to close their eyes, and drawing upon my knowledge of this Baha’i community, I explained that I was going to take them on an imaginary trip to the future:

Imagine yourself standing on a hill, outside your community. The year is 2010, ten years from today. Look carefully at what your community looks like today, the future, ten years from now. Who is living in your community? Have the youth returned? Are there schools? Who is working in the schools? Are there as many girls in the schools as there are boys? Who is working in the fields? Is the workload shared? Are you earning a good *peso* for your potatoes? Is your community economically

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<sup>17</sup> Thinking on my feet, I called on the work of sociologist and peace scholar Elise Boulding, who in translating the Dutch sociologist, Fred Polak’s (1961) text *Images of the Future*, designed her own “imaging” workshops. I was one of a handful of people she trained in this approach, which is outlined in *Building a Global Civic Culture: Education for an Independent World*. Boulding, E. (1988) *Building a Global Civic Culture: Education for an Independent World*. New York: Teacher’s College Press.

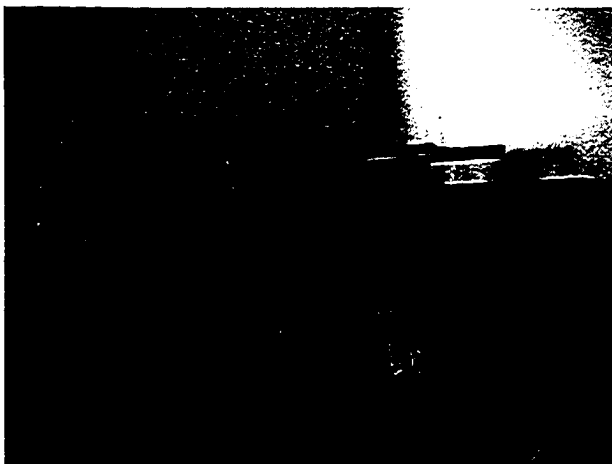
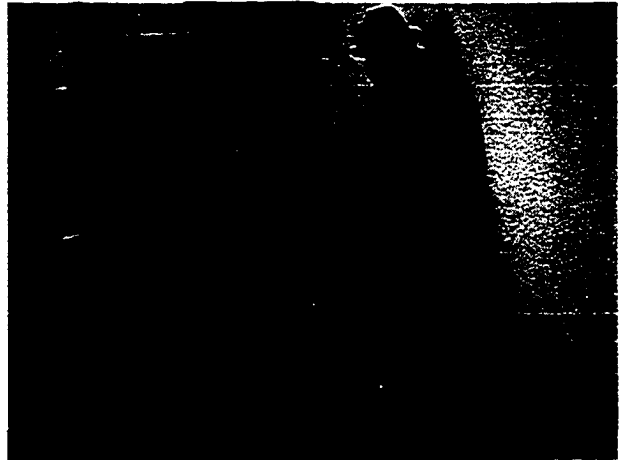
sustaining itself? Do you have a good source of water, of light? What distinguishes your Baha'i community? Do you consult together? Do the women contribute? Are women's voices heard? Do you have full participation (at community events)? Do you pray and deepen together? How does your community build capacity?

When everyone, as they said, “woke up from their dreams” of the future, I asked people to form groups, according to community. I gave groups drawing materials to illustrate their “image of the future” (Figures 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f). Then, the groups shared their “dreams” with one another and consulted on the common factors in each vision. Each group then created a new drawing, one that combined the images of all into a common, shared vision on a larger sheet of paper, and shared their common visions with the larger group.

The women and men participants were equally as engaged and focused while their drew. They were eager to begin, the level of activity was high, and the energy in the room was electric. Even the children helped draw. I busily traveled from group to group making sure each had the materials they needed or answering questions, for which there were few. The level of engagement in the small group discussions was animated; women contributed their thoughts and visions as much as the men. As I traveled around the room, I heard talk and laughter, observed smiling faces, and saw drawings of agriculture and infrastructure that transformed a vast eroded moonscape into thriving community. Women, men and children added detail to images of cooperative gardens, schools for children, literacy for women, art initiatives, universities, hospitals, roads and electricity.

This segment of the *cursillo*—revisoning the *campo*—belonged to the participants. These were their stories, their reality; their knowledge production about development and their resistance to modernity, on their terms as Indians and as Baha'is.

Figures 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 15e, 15f  
Drawing Images of the Future



These visions were not those of outside donor agencies who determine what communities that live in “abject poverty” need. These visions did not consider the cost benefits of urban migration to alleviate Bolivian poverty. These responses to a visioning exercise are *testimonios* of development.

Representatives—two women and five men—from each community shared their collective material and spiritual vision (Figures 16a, 16b). The following section reports out the results of the goals they imagined. (Figures 17a, 17b, 17c). So as to not change the original transcription, the narratives appear in the third person as translated from Quechua to Spanish.<sup>18</sup>

Figures 16a  
Sharing Images of the Future



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<sup>18</sup> The original English translation was actually incorrect and Spanish consultants transcribed these narratives.



16b  
Sharing Images of the Future



Figures 16c  
Sharing Images of the Future



Figure 17a  
Images of the Future

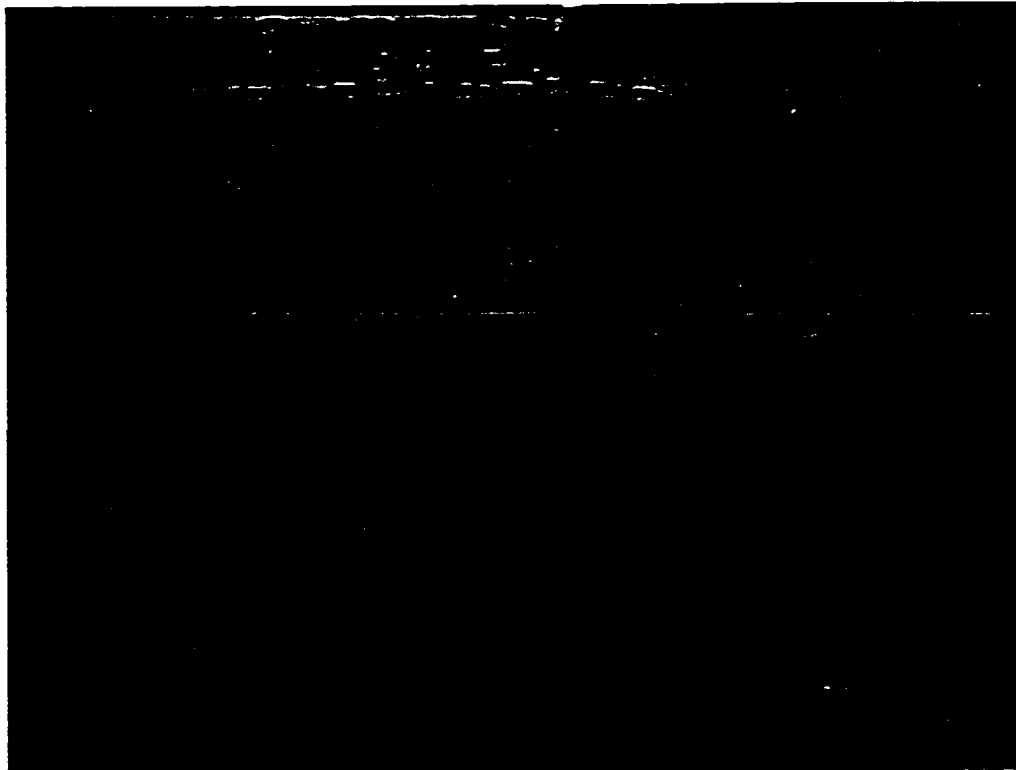


Figure 17b  
Images of the Future

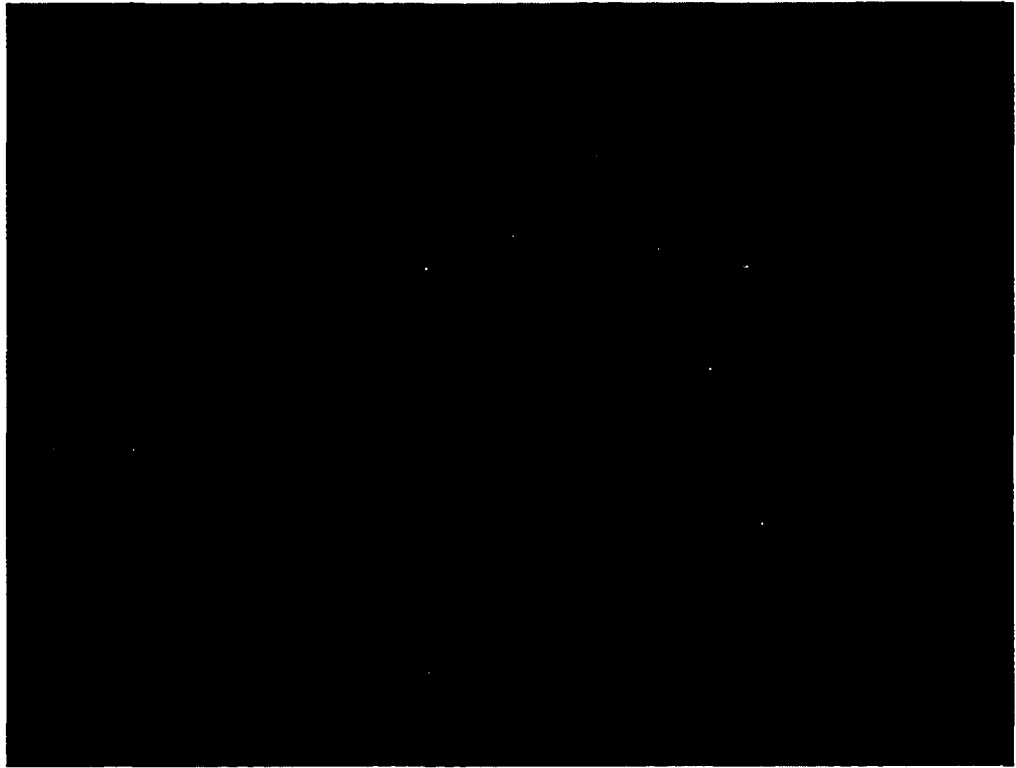


Figure 17c  
Images of the Future



Figure 17d  
Images of the Future



The man who came with his wife and child from a village between Phoqonchi and Poroma pointed to his drawing and said:

In the vision they shared, they want their lands to be more productive so that they can feel their children. They want to find unity in the community. They want the resources of the community to be flowering and to have much knowledge. They want to achieve having love for God and love for humanity, and they want to live according to the teachings of Baha'u'llah and to put (them) into practice. All of the Baha'i teachings can be applied in a university, a Baha'i university.

The *anciano caminante* from Poroma walked to front of the room:

Here, he is showing, he's drawn a light here, and this means the following: the sun that illumines us represents God and God through the rays of the sun sends his teachings and we are we, at the bottom, and we share with others. It goes like a chain, we share with others, another group, and they share with others, and it continues to grow. From God the teachings are expanding to the whole world, the all the human beings in the world. And, these teachings will guide them so that they can develop materially and

spiritually. In this way, humanity can reach well-being. And, doing this service, which they do for the love of God, they also go to God.

The woman who traveled alone offered:

...the vision they have for the next ten years is to have schools, to have universities, where the children and the pre-youth can study, so they can have a complete knowledge of all the areas. And in this school, they will have all the teachings that they need. In this way, they will achieve the unity that they are hoping for.

Then, another man said:

One vision that their LSA had was that in ten years they would become united, to work together, the men and women would work together to establish the unity. They would have regular Baha'i community events with universal participation. That's what they want to have in ten years. Another is to have a school that is functioning—with all the students participating. They want drinkable water.

Development did not mean only material productivity or natural resource management for the market economy; development encompassed a vision of the future. Material productivity, as defined by these people, sustained the future of the community, i.e., “food to feed the children,” “drinkable water.” Qualities, such as unity, knowledge, love and well-being, were identified as spiritual resources that “guide” their people and humanity. They defined governance—the right for self-determination—as the administrative order of the Baha'i Faith, the Local Spiritual Assembly. In the dry, mountainous Andean terrain, “flowering” is the act of development, and “knowledge,” acquired and innate, is development's goal.

Envisioning the Strategic One Year Plan In the second session on Sunday, I asked the group to “return to the present.” From their images of the future, participants were to work backwards to the present and identify a one-year plan. Time, in the Quechua cosmology, cycles Pachamama's agricultural seasons, and in the Baha'i Faith,

the new year begins with the Spring Equinox. So, in talking about a year plan, I used language that referred to next Naw-Ruz (New Year) or referenced the period from seed to harvest. For instance, I suggested a field of potatoes as a vision of the future that could require a year to remove rocks to prepare the soil. The task required coming back to reality, to the present condition of the community, with its resources and human power, to identify a small project, one community initiative that would be a baby step towards achieving the ten year goal.

Puka Puka, for example, decided it needed to work more closely with other efforts in their surrounding community, such as with the NGOs that meet in nearby Tarabuco. Although they built their school, they've realized the children who attend are not very healthy, so, the men decided they wanted to do something to improve the children's nutrition. Poroma, the community furthest away, decided it would ask for support from other closer communities. A representative from Phoqonchi talked about educational efforts for their children, even though there were only a few, and another community suggested tutorial programs.

Jacinta, the woman who had "assisted" in the 1989 TMCA activities, and who admitted to gaining confidence during the implementation, walked to the front of the room carrying a chair. She sat and proceeded to describe the organic process of women's grassroots development:

We, women, (in the women's club) have had meetings with fifteen communities for some time. So, this is already an old school. The women came together to work on their *tejidos y costuras* (weavings and sewing). They learned everything there. (The women) have increased in great quantity. The women built a little room, 4x5 meters, no more. So many women came, there was no more space. They had to build another, there was no place to sit, they built another space for their looms and their tools. They brought foods that the mothers didn't know about, the women were

very happy. So, more people came. Now, they were meeting in two places, they even met outside together in people's homes, there were so many women. They were looking for the economic support from other institutions. They went to other organizations, such as PLAN *de Padrinos*. From the support from these NGOs they were able to buy land and to even build homes for some people. We, as Baha'is....since Baha'u'llah created the teachings, like the equality of women and men, we know how to share...so as a family, thanks to the mothers, a school has been built in our community (in Sucre near the airport) so the children don't have to go into the city to study. Children from many communities are studying there.

For her one-year SED idea, she decided she would initiate an art income-generating project as a way of getting at literacy training for women.

With a long-term vision and ideas for a practical, "seed to harvest" one-year SED projects, the participants concluded the *cursillo* with a number of songs sung by the younger women. The other women, the faces I had not seen in the *cursillo*, had begun to prepare the dinner.

I did not administer a formal evaluation of the workshop session. I did, however, notice the smiles on the participants's faces. Figures 18a, 18b, and 18c convey their response to the process.



Figures 18a  
Informal Participant Evaluation of SED Community Process



Figures 18b



Figures 18c



PAR Session 2: Bringing Environment to the Puka Puka

In my remaining few days in the field and in preparation for meeting with the Puka Puka elders, I thought about the few resources and the many wants and needs of the eroded, but fruitful Puka Puka community. From the previous workshop, I learned of the community's desire to improve the health of its members. As I thought about the sun and potatoes, two natural resources with potential beyond their current uses, I came upon *Asociación Sucrense de Ecología*, an environmental NGO operated by members of the German Sucre community, which was one I had passed daily but had never noticed.<sup>19</sup> There, I met Ian, a Peace Corp volunteer who had arrived only two weeks before. Ian's specialty was recycling human waste and composting:

I have an idea for latrines that would be perfect here for the sunlight and the climate. Essentially, you do your thing, then you pull out a tray everyday and you put it inside a container like thing that is surrounded by mirrors. The mirrors reflect the sunlight onto the waste and powderized it, essentially. Then you mix it in with organic matter, compost for example. It's excellent for adding nutrients such as nitrogen back into the soil. It's perfect, very, very easy to make. Especially if you don't have the standards for a latrine (I. Satori, 2000, personal communication).

He had not heard of the school initiative in Puka Puka and, although his region of responsibility had not included the southern areas, he expressed interest in providing service to Puka Puka, if approved by his director. I invited Ian to come with me to Puka Puka the next day, but he was unable to come at that time.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Bolivia is home to a large number of German communities.

<sup>20</sup> That next morning, my driver, my Spanish-Quechua translator, a 14 year-old boy with limited English whom I found to translate in case I ran into difficulty, my son, and I waited for Ian at the appointed place and time. We waited for over an hour at the ecological center when I received word that Ian had been stuck in a mandatory Peace Corp training and would not be able to join us. Three hours later, we arrived in Puka Puka where the about thirty participants stood waiting in the dirt for us.

When we arrived in Puka Puka, we were shown inside an unfinished, newly constructed adobe hut that would eventually be used to house the teachers of the Puka Puka school but was now filled with potatoes. All of us piled in, single file, down stairs and into a long, empty sub-terranean room (Figure 19a, 19b).

Figure 19a  
Meeting with Puka Puka Community



Figure 19b  
Meeting with Puka Puka Community



We sat on a wooden board bench balanced on rocks. In front of *Tata* Octavio, the young *amauta*, stood the only table, and on it were his notebook and his pouch of *coca*. The others sat in the dirt or kneeled against the wall. I asked for permission to videotape. The room was filled with men, but for the two women, with young children, who sat by the door. These women were Gregoria, Florencia's sister and Sadai, *Tata* Octavio's wife. After prayer, meditation, and an introduction from *Tata* Octavio, Maruja opened in Quechua with words that were not translated into Spanish for me. *Tata* Tomás spoke softly and then hammered a nail into the white stuccoed wall with a rock where he hung a small chalkboard. Then, Maruja translated what *Tata* Tomás said:

Seeing the reality that there is a necessity in our community to develop education, and as Baha'is, we have taken the initiative to meet together

with the *Sindicato* (union) and with other local NGO organizations in education. We, as Baha'is, have seen... we have studied the promise of 'Abdul-Baha's where he says that if the indigenous people receive an adequate education, they will become so illumined they will illuminate the world. So, in agreement with this promise, we, as a people, have taken the initiative to develop an integrated education. More than anything, as Baha'is, as indigenous people we act to fulfill the promise of 'Abdul-Baha.

I took a deep breath and silently invoked the presence of Pachamama and Baha'u'llah; I stood and walked to the board. With the stub of chalk, I drew a vertical and horizontal arrow, and a circle (Figures 20a, 20b, 20c):

Development has come from the top, down....What you have been doing in your community is from the bottom, up. ....to help you continue with your development, I share with you these ten (circular) steps in the social and economic development process.

Figure 20a  
Social and Economic Development from the Bottom Up



Figure 20b  
Social and Economic Development from the Bottom Up

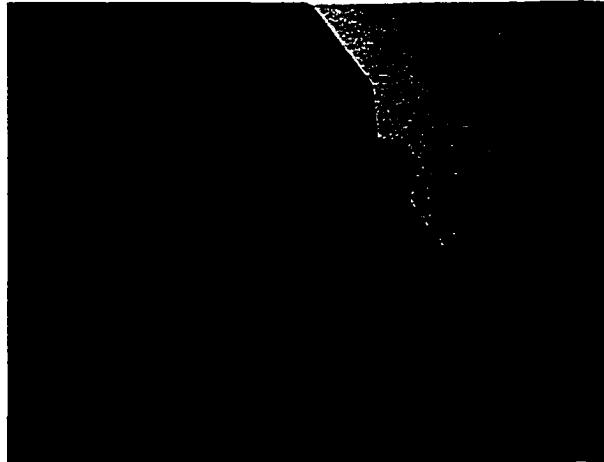
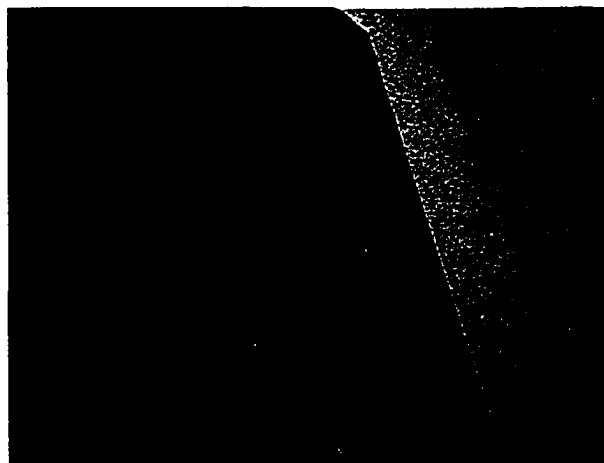


Figure 20c  
Social and Economic Development from the Bottom Up



By this time a crowd of young girls stood in the doorway or squatted down to look in from the window. I continued in English, which was translated into Spanish and then into Quechua until Step Six, Assessing Lessons Learned. The discussion of this step included reviewing the types of efforts communities might adopt, such as educational, health promotion, agriculture, community development, appropriate technology, radio, or business projects. But, I didn't

know if the individuals' long-term visions were shared by the whole community and used the envisioning exercise to ascertain common ground.

After a bowl of potato soup for lunch, I began the visualization, adapted to include the history of this particular community. I asked the audience to join the spirit of *los ancianos caminates* who walked the *cerros* (hills) above Puka Puka. I omitted the drawing activities because of time, space and resources. (Figures 21a, 21b, 21c).

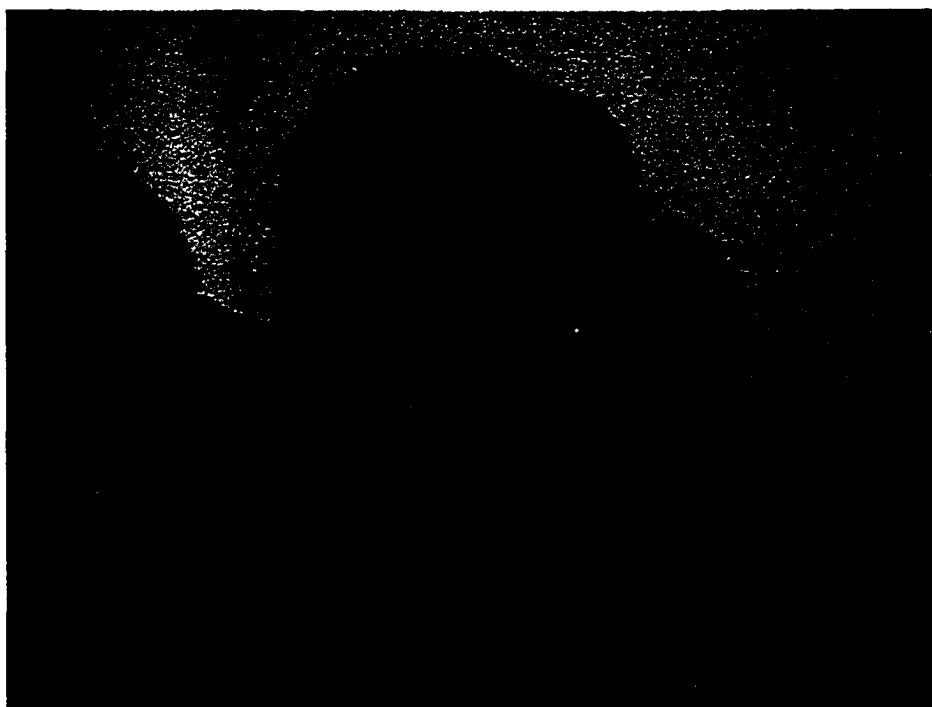
Figures 21a  
Imaging the Future



Figures 21b  
Imaging the Future



Figures 21c  
Imaging the Future





Instead, I asked people to talk about their “dreams.” Each person took a turn. After all the men had shared their visions for their community of the future, which included hospitals, universities, building wells for water and electricity, I asked the women to share their ideas. They shared their idea of sending the youth to city to receive their college education for the purpose of returning to Puka Puka to establish the university. The other women who stood in the doorway earlier were now gone, only Raquel and Sadai remained, with their smallest children near them.

Sadai spoke.<sup>21</sup> She talked about the children. In her vision, the children were healthy and the gardens were green. The children must be strong, she said, the children must be healthy. The land does not grow enough different kinds of food to keep the children healthy. I invited Raquel to speak. She spoke softly about the nutrition that she and others don’t know, and said that she’d like to learn more. She said she’d like to care for the health of the children.

It was at this time that I asked if any of the communities members knew about composting food scraps to make fertile soil or harvesting the energy from the sun to operate lights at night. The men said they had never heard of using food waste for themselves. They needed the scraps, particularly the potato peels for their pigs. The pigs are their only cash crop and the larger pigs brought more money to buy gas for their stoves.

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<sup>21</sup> There are no field notes of this event except for digital video to which this section refers. A large segment of videotape from the group discussion was *accidentally* recorded over the next day. Therefore, her narrative is explained in the third person.

I offered some next steps. First, I suggested that they continue to consult about all their visions and identify a few common visions. I suggested that they invite the larger community together to build a model of their future Puka Puka with rocks, stones and sticks and I stressed the inclusion of the women and the youth. I emphasized the important, and different, perspectives women provide. Secondly, I agreed with the women—life comes from the earth, Pachamama. Without good soil, we can't grow good crops and without good crops we can't grow a healthy community. I told them Ian, my intention to bring him to Puka Puka, and the technical assistance he could provide. I told everyone that I would try to introduce him to the Puka Puka community vis-à-vis the videotape tomorrow morning before my plane departed the next morning. I made no promises, however having learned the meaning of broken promises to the Andean Indians. I concluded with words about development as a process, which like potatoes, must act in relation to time and conditions and acknowledged the as experts of their own development *Tata* Tomás offered closing words:

We have an urgent necessity, it worries us and it makes us very sad that we know about improving the land and our crops and we'd like to have some help in that area. We need help, technical help with someone who has technical knowledge in this area. In this way, we can improve our community, develop our community in this department of Chuquisaca and in all of Bolivia.

I left Puka Puka feeling like I had learned more than I offered, and for a moment I was the one who felt worried and sad for not providing the community with what they wanted. The next morning, however, I ran to find Ian, and with my video camera, brought him to the *sede* where Maruja and Sabino waited. They talked about the

community's needs and the assistance he could provide. And, after witnessing their handshake, I left for the airport

(Field Notes, June 25, 2000) After having become a Northerner in the South, I would leave "there" for "here" and in nine hours, I would return as a Southerner living in the North.



## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*"... the uplifting of women to full equality  
with men can help the environmental cause by bringing  
a new spirit of feminine values into decision-making about natural resources."  
(Baha'i International Community, 1986)*

#### Conclusions

##### Discursive Conclusions

This implementation evaluation has taken the UNIFEM/BIC partnership project to the level of GAD discourse. The study was conducted in response to an absence in development literature of narratives of the lived experiences of ordinary people living in Third World countries who become the participants of development projects, including GAD projects. This study accepted the challenge presented by postmodern feminists who suggested that the Latin American genre of *testimonio* is a space where indigenous women can conduct their struggles to resist and delegitimize dominant discourses and produce knowledge about Gender and Development. The presence of the researcher's voice in the *testimonio* suggested a new way to "authentically listen" to the women and men whose voices have been absent in development literature.

This study illustrated that the voices of indigenous women, those whom development refers to as the “poorest of the poor,” and whom GAD literature renders as hapless, are diverse, resilient, and knowledgeable. This study has also shown that indigenous men from the Third World can give *testimonio* at the level of knowledge production to conduct their struggles against 510 years of oppression. While women spoke about development *as* personal, development, for men, is political and tied to colonial systems of oppression.

Finally, this study introduced to development discourse a new and refreshing alternative notion of progress as one that is not only fundamentally propelled by the forces of science, but one that also is guided by spiritual principles. Instead of the “tried and failed” theories of economic neoliberalism, the Baha’i SED approach emphasized the moral education and/or values-based character and capacity building as the backbone of the development process for the purpose of achieving social justice and prosperity (BIC, 2000). The Baha’i SED approach equated the equality of women with the advancement of civilization and lasting peace.

### Implementational Conclusions

The causality of the 1989 TMCA project’s goals to behavior and attitude change in the Quechua participants’ lives was difficult to measure. The goals of the 1989 TMCA project, the teachings of the Baha’i Faith, particularly the principle of the equality of women and men and the skill of consultation, and the aims of other Baha’i inspired projects held before and after the 1989 TMCA project were similar. Nonetheless, the participants of the 1989 TMCA project continued to raise their awareness about women’s

role and gender issues. Young women did increase their literacy and formal educational levels and older women did wish they could increase their own education and did encourage education in their young daughters. The UNIFEM/BIC “Traditional Media as Change Agent” project was a success in so much as it stimulated these increased activities.

However, the 1989 TMCA project in the Bolivian site experienced difficulties at all institutional levels. These implementation errors trickled down to interpersonal relationships and left lasting ill feelings with the participants towards the local coordinator. Without prior knowledge of PAR’s philosophy and ideology, and without previous experience with development, the local project coordinator, a well-intentioned *mestizaje* Bolivian, was doomed to replicate neocolonial practices. The historically oppressed indigenous populations in Bolivia were already familiar with the authoritative style under the Spanish rule and again under the national government. This finding indicates that even within the Baha’i community, shifting the locus of control to the local, grassroots communities requires conscious, intentional, and deliberate action. Without this study that solicited the perceptions of the project participants ten years later, this implementational error would not have come to light.

Even though the original project’s evaluation did reveal aggregate change ten years ago, the anecdotal accounts this study generated revealed mixed lasting responses. In some families, the changes from the 1989 TMCA project endured; in other families the behaviors reverted to the established cultural patterns. The extent to which the Baha’i community was able to act as a stimulus to reinforce new behaviors and attitudes, influenced women and men’s capacity for sustaining change after the project ended.

The visioning technique of imaging the future, devised by Quaker feminist peace scholar and sociologist Elise Boulding (1988), “can provide planners and decision makers with the necessary thought materials for policy development in the present” (p. 116). This PAR social action component of this study discovered this technique matched the Quechua worldview and lifestyle and was a perfectly suited tool to assist them become planners and decision makers of their own rural regions.

It remains to be determined how influential the social action component of this research was to the overall future development of one community; however through cyberspace and the fluid global Baha’i community, I learned that individuals continued to take additional action to improve the environment’s capacity to meet the needs of its members and continued to support the achievements of women. In an unexpected Thanksgiving visit in November of 2001 from Herman Banks, Olga’s U.S. American husband, I learned that *Tata Claudio* was one of 180 indigenous elected delegates from around the world to attend the inauguration of the Baha’i Terraces on the slope of Mt. Carmel, Israel in May, 2001. Also, I learned he enrolled at FUNDAEC, a university in Cali, Colombia that specializes in rural development and rural education. Florencia has left the university in Cochabamba for Nur University in Santa Cruz and is majoring in rural education. In addition, the July-September, 2002 issue of *One Country* magazine, an international newsletter of the BIC with wide global distribution, published an article on Puka Puka entitled “In Bolivia, An Isolated Village Seeks to Establish its Own School System in the Face of Discrimination.”

### Theoretical Conclusions

Contradictions in GAD Success. This study showed that development “failures” were as informative as development “successes.” In terms of accomplishing GAD’s long-term goals of “empowering women through collective action, to encourage women to challenge gender ideologies and institutions that subordinate women” (Parpart, 1995), the 1989 TMCA project succeeded by reaching the next generation, the young girls who grew up to lead what appears to be an embryonic stage of a social movement towards increased education. GAD bypassed children and youth, yet this population was the one that most benefited from the 1989 TMCA activities. This study discovered that children and youth are the wealth of these indigenous communities and the women and men interviewed for this study would want this population included in gender development.

The unpredicted findings of this study revealed more about the deeper systemic weaknesses in the larger, “global-local cultural dialectic” than it did about the sustained behaviors of the original implementation. A GAD success—the empowerment of women vis-à-vis urban migration for education and resistance to racist schooling—could have constituted a failure for the sustainability of the rural, indigenous community, but for the efforts of one model indigenous Baha’i community that initiated a social and economic development (SED) plan. That finding raised questions for the ability of the rural indigenous community to sustain itself, particularly in a setting where Bolivia’s new theology—neoliberalism—supports urbanization as a cost-efficient means to poverty alleviation.

Since the rural “woman’s condition” and her status emerged as key indicators of a community’s ability to respond to the needs of the environment, this study challenged



GAD to move beyond its “early stage” of linking gender and environment in rhetoric to crystallize the links between women, gender and environment in development practice.<sup>1</sup> This study confirmed that women and indigenous people are still excluded from the definitions and meanings of sustainability and sustainable development (Buckingham-Hatfield, 2000).

### Methodological Conclusions

Using Feminist Participatory Action Research to End the Silence. By giving a “voice to the silenced,” using an emerging feminist methodology from the PAR margins, this study contributed to breaking the silence that has enshrouded the 1989 TMCA project in the Bolivian site in a veil of secrecy for ten years. The ability to be transparent, as well as honest, illustrated that it is possible, albeit difficult, to raise questions about Baha’i institutional and individual behavior, particularly when actions are in a development context and influence indigenous peoples’ lives.

The feminist and participatory framework of this research demonstrated that it is possible to give attention to the women in a highly male-dominated culture. This included not only seeing through a gender lens to highlight the quantity and quality of women’s participation, but also valuing the work the women performed for the community when not engaging in public activity. It also included as seeing the links

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<sup>1</sup> While it has long been acknowledged that the links between gender and environment are “still at an early stage,” (Rathgeber, 1995) and the Earth Summit 2002 in Johannesburg crystallized the links even more for the global agenda, women and indigenous people are still excluded from the definitions and meanings of sustainability and sustainable development (Buckingham-Hatfield, 2000). Even in UNIFEM’s 2000 report on the progress of women in the world, not one of the four factors on women’s empowerment addresses women’s knowledge of community sustainability (See Chapter 1). Although the concept of gender is still confusing and tension exists within the field (El-Bushra, 2000), mainstreaming gender is presently the development approach of choice by moderate funding agencies to improve lives for women.

between gender and the environment. Since feminist approaches to PAR are sensitive to cultural appropriateness, this approach meant knowing to cooperate with the men in order to speak with the women.

This study attempted to fill in some of the gaps between PAR and feminist approaches by using a more inclusive approach to feminist theorizing, one identified in U.S. feminism as Women of Color perspectives, as a PAR starting point. This study illustrated that it is possible to reject (white) Western feminist values and still conduct feminist research. Western feminist values, projected towards the South, have polarized women's feminist and feminine activity as "real" and "fake" feminism and assumed the category "woman" represented only the "modern."

Additionally, this research has shown that a study conducted by a Baha'i in Baha'i communities can also constitute feminist research. This study has also shown that it is possible for a Latina woman from the North, with remote indigenous roots, to be welcomed in homes to conduct research with indigenous people in the South, particularly when the methods invited participatory and emancipatory action. All this feminist theorizing occurred within the practical research context of fieldwork but never directly addressed "feminism" as a construct with the Quechua Baha'i project participants who actively engaged in their own feminist activity.

The participatory action component of this research showed that it is possible to combine doctoral research with social action. For example, by the end of field research, my translator had empowered herself so as to begin workshops without me or to explain and clarify my interview questions on her own. Throughout the study, she was fascinated with my small cassette player and when I left, I gave it to her as a gift and encouraged her

to record the oral history of *los ancianos caminantes*, an idea for which she expressed interest. Even though the local project coordinator of the 1989 TMCA had difficulty with my investigations, she decided to revisit her role in the UNIFEM project for her bachelor's thesis, which she acknowledged was influenced by this study.

(Post)Ethnography and *Testimonio* as “Authentic Listening.” The ethnographic-oriented bent of this study suggested that there are research strategies that can serve as alternatives to the dominant evaluative modes that serve development agencies but not the participants. To those looking for new ways to conduct postcolonial research “nearby” and “together-with” (Chowdhry, 1995) with Third World women and men about Gender and Development, the presence of the researcher's voice as “interpreter as agent in collaboration with those concerned” (Hobart, 1993, p. 15) opened new possibilities for ethnography. “Authentic listening” emphasized hearing what the speaker said and wants to researcher to know about development. As a (post)ethnographer, I used my skill to “unmake development” (Escobar, 1995).

Finally, this study has shown that in a “postcolonial world of global contacts” (Clifford, 1997), ethnographic-oriented approaches do not require lengthy stays in the field: time was less of a factor than was perspective.

### Implications and Recommendations

*"People in the community that are not Baha'i  
now think that we, as Baha'i's are tricksters.  
They criticize us and for that reason do not come to activities."*

*The women have wonderful qualities, like generosity, humility.  
Also, they show forth desire to learn, they have real interest.  
I suggest that in the future the coordinator be of the same community because that person would  
understand the community and the reality of the people.*

*"In my estimation if a program like this were to continue,  
the people of the project should receive training in how to behave correctly with rectitude of conduct.  
...the coordinators of the program should know how to live in the campo, know the realities in the campo,  
and the problems in the campo. If the program were to continue it should be under the direction of a local  
institution."*

### Testimonio Puts a Name and Face to Development

It can be reasonably assumed that as Florencia was the first to leave, she may be the first to return to help establish a rural university. But, it is not known at this time how successful the SED efforts of the Puka Puka Baha'i community will be in counteracting the current movement afoot in Bolivia to encourage urban migration, similar to *El Alto*, as a cheaper alternative to rural development, nor is it known how the improved roads will influence the community of Phoqonchi. However, based on the resiliency and resourcefulness of the women and men from the indigenous populations, as well as from the exhortations of the Baha'i Faith about the important role the indigenous people play, it is not unrealistic to hope for success.

More narrative, or *testimonio* studies, such as this one, that put a face, a name, and a story to development interventions are needed to invite a greater dialogue regarding the

consequences of gender work on the survival of the actual women, men, youth and children whose cultures and histories are place-based. The long-term impact of gender empowerment as a contributing factor to, or as an influence working against, “vanishing ethnoscapescapes” (Davis, 2002) is not known. More gender-based research that looks at what happens after a project packs up and goes home is needed. Continued research on, and education, rhetoric and human rights action about the links between the loss of native culture and its effects on the prosperity of humankind is needed.

Also, if a broader, international women’s movement based on non-Western values of feminism is to emerge, and if a more inclusive body of feminist theorizing is to develop, more research is needed about the activities of indigenous women and men in Third World countries who are actively engaged in improving women’s status and in transforming the harmful habits and behaviors that had led to the use of force against women’s growth and development. Not included in this literature are the successful efforts of the Baha’i communities throughout the world that have increased women’s participation in grassroots decision-making processes.

#### The Viability of Feminist Participatory Action Research Methods

I selected a feminist approach to PAR because of its capacity to give indigenous women and men a space to participate in knowledge production about Gender and Development and because it gives research a social action goal. I learned first-hand that the concerns FPR literature asserts about the increased emotional demands incurred by the researcher while conducting feminist participatory research are valid. However, I found the benefits of FPR as a viable approach to redistribute the power differential

between the researcher and the researched, to generate accounts first-hand about women and men's experiences, particularly in settings with indigenous people from Third World countries, and to animate social action far outweighs the discomfort of the researcher. Since the intensity of the FPR research is high, particularly when women become allies for one another across cultural settings, and time consuming, it is beneficial for future FPR researchers to study the current FPR frameworks (See Maguire, at el. forthcoming).

Even though this study and current GAD literature raises questions about the longevity of the GAD approach into the 21<sup>st</sup> century without its redefinition, it continues to be used as the development approach of choice for mainstream agencies. To further develop feminist approaches to PAR to other cultural settings, this study recommends mainstream development agencies investigate and apply feminist participatory research frameworks to evaluate its GAD interventions.

Since (Western) feminist approaches are questioned in most indigenous communities in Latin America, I learned that the FPR researcher must be sensitive to and respectful of local cultural practices. Since the family is valued as the pinnacle of society in the Quechua culture, and since a woman traveling alone in the *campo* is frowned upon, I brought my teenage son. The Quechua women and men accepted that I opened the research experience to include him and approved that he participated as a co-researcher in all of my interviews and workshops I animated. I maintain that FPR researchers should give serious attention to develop the idea of family-oriented research in particular cultural settings where family is valued.

### A Family-Centered Gender and Sustainable Development Approach

This study suggests that the inclusion of youth and children might be the best method for implementing GAD with indigenous women and men in the rural areas. The youth have greater access to education, and the community still values family as the primary social unit of society. The parent/child reciprocity emphasizes intergenerational wealth, strengthens the family unit and builds the sustainability of community. Further research is needed to explore a family-centered approach to gender and development. FAD (Family and Development) might provide a systemic way to shift unequal power relations, to empower women while involving men, and to build the environment's ability to meet the present and future needs of its community members without alienating women, men or youth.

### The Future of "Traditional Media as Change Agent"

To prepare Baha'is for this, or for any other future development funded by outside donor agencies, this study recommends that:

- The Baha'i world, including the National Spiritual Assemblies, continue to deepen on the conceptual framework of the Baha'i approach to SED as a legitimate Baha'i activity distinct from "Baha'i teaching."<sup>2</sup>
- The Local Spiritual Assemblies build their implementation and fiscal capacities by initiating small, short-term SED projects aimed at relief or

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<sup>2</sup> Materials include letters and directives from the Office of Social and Economic Development (OSED), the Mottahedeh Development Services "Developing Patterns of Community Life," and *Recreating the World: A Practical Guide to Building Sustainable Communities* by M. and J. Bopp.

advocacy work, or support individual initiatives that do, and gradually increase in complexity to longer, more involved service projects.

To further develop the “Traditional Media as Change Agent” project, in Bolivia or elsewhere, this study recommends that:

- The situated, historic conditions of the people for whom the initiative is aimed be taken under consideration prior to implementation and that the cultural specificities be taken into account;
- The TMCA project design include a mandatory training for the National and Local Assemblies to ensure a clear understanding of the project goals; a training on gender analysis, which includes report writing from a gender perspective; and an on-going monitoring system with clear points of entry for routine feedback. Additional, all members of the NSAs should have greater direct participation with the implementation to avoid misunderstanding, to facilitate communication with the communities.
- The NSA assume responsibility for coordinating SED training for the local communities to build local capacity to sustain the project once funding ends;
- The local coordinator, or animator, of the participatory action process should come from the local community. This person should be trained and/or have experience in SED, however minimal, and have knowledge about the philosophy and goals of PAR, should have good understanding of the local and national laws with regards to indigenous rights, and should receive training about proper “code of conduct”;



- The project be referred to as a program and include the expectation that the community will sustain the program from the inside once outside funding ceases;
- A FAD (Family and Development) approach be tried whereby the entire community, young children as well, engage in gender awareness and gender consultation.

### Recommendations for Further Research and Action

To further proposals for Gender and Development interventions with a thrust towards building the social, economic, and environmental capacity of a community to sustain itself, I propose the following assessment criteria:

- **Building Upon Women's Knowledge of the Environment**

Gender initiatives should aim to solicit rural women's knowledge about the environment. It is the rural women who live in and about the external world in their capacities as animal tenders, childcare providers, and agriculturalists.

Objectives for fostering confidence and self-esteem in women, and for establishing men's respect of them, should build upon women's successes rather than their inadequacies. For example, when asking women to speak in public, women should demonstrate knowledge of that which they are most familiar.

- **Rural Educational Opportunities**

Gender initiatives that encourage literacy and educational pursuits should consider the SAT (System for Tutorial Learning) program for rural education so as to not deplete the rural areas from its most valuable resources, women and

youth. FUNDEAC (*Fundación para la Aplicación y Enseñanza de las Ciencias*, Foundation for the Application and Teaching of the Sciences), is a university in Cali, Colombia that trains rural educators in their University Center for Rural Well-being program.

- **Leadership Development and Community Building**

Leaders contribute to building a sense of community. Initiatives should build leadership capacity from within the community. Leadership training should be viewed as technical assistance for the development of human resources. Training skills should include, among others, those aimed towards shifting the power inequalities between indigenous communities and funding agencies. Skills, such as grant and proposal writing and the development and empowerment of voice, particularly in the women and youth, promote leadership. Leadership training must be culturally appropriate and respect “the Indian way.”

- **Self Determination**

Initiatives are accountable to the community or constituency. The group members, including women and youth, should be involved in participatory and democratic future visioning and planning decision-making processes. Initiatives should enhance a community or constituency’s capacity to make spiritual, as well as material progress towards improving the quality of their life on their terms. Special consideration to the environment’s capacity to meet the needs of its members should be given. Methodologies for building the capacity for self-determination should be consistent with the community’s worldview.

- **Growth and Development as a Process that Increases in Level of Complexity**

Development, when seen as an organic process, sprouts from the grassroots and grows upward. Growth, when seen as a spiritual process, increases not in terms of material expansion but in degrees of complexity. Initiatives should encourage growth and development in increasing levels of complexity. If initiatives introduce material results, such as composting human and vegetable waste, solar energy or labor saving devices, the initiative should provide assistance to move towards more complex projects, such as programs that engage youth, which require more planning, consultation, participants and funding.

- **Building Institutional Capacity**

Local institutions and organizations serve as the parents for the community.

Initiatives should strengthen the capacity of local institutions to better serve the people at the village level. The creation of an on-going monitoring system to measure the impact of gender change on the environment places responsibility in the hands of the local institution. Local institutions and organizations can bridge the gap between state designed public policies and local needs, such as forced urbanization.

- **Reflection and Action**

By building into an initiative the capacity for reflection a community can consult and make decisions about the direction in which the community wants to move.

Initiatives that build upon the participation of the community, under the auspices of a local institution or organization that monitors on-going evaluation, should provide opportunities for reflective feedback from which continued or new action can be taken.

- Towards a Redefinition of Development

Postmodern literature by Third World intellectuals and the grassroots activism of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century has built momentum towards redefining development and exploring alternatives. Initiatives should include components that acknowledge the spiritual dimension of human beings by prioritizing the moral, emotional, physical, as well as intellectual aspects of individuals.

- Commitment to Social Justice and Influencing Society

The exposure to one system of injustice and inequality can lead to the identification of other unhealthy and harmful systems within the community. Gains made in gender equity can lead to new action taken towards race and class justice.

Interventions should not serve one particular community but should extend themselves to improving conditions for the greater community. In the case of the Baha'i community, service is viewed as the highest form of worship and local initiatives should aim to influence global transformation.

- Spiritual Indicators

Spiritually based indicators for development are measures to assess individual and community progress from the perspective of spiritual principles.<sup>3</sup> Spiritual principles consider not only human well-being but also spiritual well-being. These principles are: 1) unity in diversity, 2) equity and justice, 3) equality of the sexes, 4) trustworthiness and moral leadership, and 5) independent investigation of truth.

The spiritual principles influence five policy areas: 1) economic development, 2) education, 3) environmental stewardship, 4) meeting basic needs in food, nutrition,

health and shelter, and 5) governance and participation. Proposals for GAD initiatives should consider these initial considerations for spiritually based indicators for development.

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<sup>3</sup> In 1998, World Bank President Jim Wolfensohn submitted a request for proposals to the world's religions organization for input on assessing development from a spiritual perspective. The BIC submitted a concept paper entitled, "Valuing Spirituality in Development" from which these ideas come.

## AFTERWORD

A story is never fully told and more is concealed than what is revealed. Within one story are contained many other stories, each with their own scripts and subplots. As Ruth Behar (1999) argues, the research must join the researched. Only in reflection and after reviewing all the video documentation for the figures in this study, did I realize the disproportionate emphasis on Florencia's life. In actuality, Florencia appears in my video documentation with less frequency than do other women or men I interviewed even when seemed to inhabit a different world than the others. What's more, the three PAR experiences I had animating social and economic development are more compelling and more germane to women and Third World development than what this study's questions directed me to answer. *Something* drove me to write/co-author/represent this study in a way that showcased Florencia's lived experiences more than those who may have played more active roles in the original project. Here, I reflect upon the operative influences.

The preparation for this study gave new meaning to the story of my origin and identity, and in reflection, I found my own "reterritorialization" in Florencia (Appadurai, 1996). Because my parents met in a development context in 1948 when the Bank for Restructuring, World Bank, selected Colombia as the first site for "modern improvements," only a personal choice my mother made to remain in the United States separates me as a First World citizen from a Third World identity.

The assumptions and values of the modern development enterprise lured my mother to an "easier" way of life in the North, which, despite my Southerly gaze,

inevitably shaped my assumptions and values. Consequently, as a First World consumer, I am awarded undeserved benefits of development and am placed as an “expert” on material development. Without a reason for Florencia to keep her Quechua bond and to perhaps and hopefully return to her village, a personal choice could lure Florencia to assume a “modern” Bolivian identity.

Florencia is a canary in the coalmine. Her reason for keeping her identity and for considering a return, unlike my mother’s, is grounded in spiritual belief. Women are indicators for the sustainability of indigenous community, and without a spiritual purpose, each subsequent generation will continue to live the life Western development “experts” design for us on their drafting table instead of the lives we could envision for ourselves. As the drawings of the visions of the future revealed, the people development call “recipients” and “the poorest of the poor,” ordinary women and men know what they’d like their communities to look like.

Another unfinished and unintended story that emerged from this study, which can only be seen in retrospection, was my contribution to the ambiguous and vague discussions about global feminism(s). By including in a gender discussion women and men with whom I genuinely acknowledge as my spiritual sisters and brothers and with whom genuinely reciprocate relations, I have reduced the perceived dichotomy between “real” and “fake” feminism and have shown that a more inclusive continuum of what constitutes feminism can exist.

It is, after all, not only the Quechua women and men from Andean Bolivia struggle to transform negative attitudes and behaviors associated with women’s low status. Gender inequities are global problems that impact the progress of women, men

and the well-being of the planet. Hopefully, the significance of these findings and the methods for the development of feminist theory contribute to more unified and diverse global movement for justice. Nothing less than the peace and security of the planet depends upon it.



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## Appendix A



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## Traditional Media as Change Agent

*Overview of "Traditional Media As Change Agent," a project developed by the Bahá'í International Community and funded by the United Nations Development Fund for Women). Overview submitted to the Bahá'í International Community by Mona Griesser of G1 contracting development organization that executed the project.*

June 1994

### What is the model for the project?

The "Traditional Media as Change Agent" project has its roots in systems and chaos theory as well as in participatory, value learning. It also has its roots in Bahá'í spiritual principles such as the innate equality of men and women, the importance of human decision-making, independent investigation of truth, unity in diversity and the central importance of education and vision. The model is characterized by the fact that it is non-linear with complex feedback loops. Its main feature is resiliency rather

Elements of the new model include empathy, connection, relationship, context, community, and initiative. Traditional model entail detachment and neutrality and are mechanistic and unsustainable. It shares with behavior models the goal that change in development is desirable. The sustainable model places its emphasis on paradox. It is open-ended so that the community may vision and so that the vision can be flexible and changeable, but at the same time the model remains goals-oriented. Its goals : the understanding of the communities involved.

It is driven by three assumptions:

1. That people have an overwhelming need for meaningfulness in their lives which is reflected in and frames the values they live by.
2. That communities and individuals are characterized by elasticity. When they themselves perceive change and can see the benefits to be derived from change, they will change, at a pace and in their own internal visions.
3. The participatory nature of reality assumes the paramount importance of relationships. People desire for recognition and connectedness. The more they feel part of their own process of development, the more they will get the work done.

<http://www.bic-un.bahai.org/94-0605.htm>

**Traditional Media as Change Agent**

groups. The local coordinator of the project is himself Chairman of the NSA and thus it is an agenda item on every occasion meets. Because of the NSA support, contact with other development agencies (Government, NGO and donors) has been mainly informal information sharing takes place. Mainstreaming rapidly takes place too, as these same people recognize the commitment objectives of raising the status of women and offer their own resources bringing to scale the small efforts initially established

In Malaysia and Bolivia, the NSAs are overburdened with other tasks and have preferred to leave the promotion of the project designated representatives. While there is no opposition from these bodies, quite the contrary, the lack of direct participation slower decision-making, lack of feedback to the community, and occasionally mixed messages, as when project personnel are transferred to another locale for another purpose.

Lack of time needed to learn the research concepts is also a problem. Formalized research is a relatively new activity and the become effective facilitators require practice. When expert technical assistance consultants have limited resources (time and a country, this activity is frequently condensed and suffers as a consequence.

The importance of service to the larger community is a relatively new experience to the Bahá'í community. Although theoretical philanthropic activities of the Bahá'í community were intended for all, in practice, in the past and partially due to limited resources reserved for the Bahá'í community. Reaching out has been an interesting experience on both sides. Some communities of other shown initial reluctance to participate in the project, but have come around as word spreads of its essentially humanistic goal communities secular/political groups have experienced suspicion at being aligned with a Faith group (as in Bolivia). Mutual respect that are being transferred has diminished this suspicion over time.

**Summary:**

The project is a highly innovative response to an entrenched social problem. The complexity of the social construct of gender determines roles for men and women has yet to penetrate development and this project is a pioneering attempt to do just that women differs widely across cultures and there are no universal solutions and no universal models for dealing with these issues certain universal principles have been formulated into a model which itself has been adapted in each of the countries in which end of the project it should be apparent whether this model and its basic tenets have started significant, sustainable, patterns of

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## Appendix B

BAHA'I INTERNATIONAL  
COMMUNITY



STATEMENT LIBRARY

## Rural Women

*Statement to the thirty-second session of the United Nations  
Commission on the Status of Women.*

Agenda item 5(b): Problems of rural women, including food, water  
resources, agricultural technology, rural employment,  
transportation and environment

New York, U.S.A.  
14-23 March 1988

The Baha'i International Community acknowledges that the process  
of solving problems of rural women requires time as well as  
energy resources. It applauds the steps outlined in the  
Secretary-General's Report on Rural Women, and is pleased to be  
able to say that many of its member communities are already  
engaged in implementing programmes such as those recommended.

The Baha'i Community especially welcomes the appeal to rural  
women themselves to become aware of the need for them to be  
equal and full participators in productive activities, both as  
contributors and beneficiaries.

The experience of Baha'i development projects shows that the  
values espoused by communities and individuals affect the amount  
of social change. Rarely, however, do documents, research  
activities and projects designed for development address the  
need to change basic attitudes that reinforce acceptance of the  
inequality of the roles women are given in most societies. The  
Baha'i Community believes that a climate of awareness that  
encourages change must be fostered. The attitudes of society  
towards women regulate their lives, determine their activities,  
prescribe their limitations and outline their responsibilities  
and duties.

The Baha'i Community would like to recommend two practical  
steps. The first is to encourage Member States to use all  
communications media, old and new, to develop a climate

conductive to social change for women. The second is to encourage the education of girls. It has been demonstrated time and again that expansion of public education can significantly affect all other development activities: agriculture, health, housing, sanitation or the environment.

A number of development projects have also shown that people's lives can be altered substantially by appropriate messages through the mass media, reinforce with practical activities. This is being achieved, for example, in the field of health, where communication programmes alter people's fundamental attitudes towards diarrhoeal diseases. In some instances, people are persuaded to behave in ways opposite to their accustomed behavior (e.g., to feed children instead of withholding food during a diarrhoeal episode). In population programmes, social marketing seeks to encourage even those who may have a negative disposition towards family planning to become more socially responsible.

In the view of the Baha'i International Community, communication projects aimed at altering attitudes and behaviour towards women and women-related issues are crucial to the success of the recommendations of the Secretary-General. Development communication is already a firmly established field of effort. Preliminary research on existing attitudes determines both who are the target audiences and what are the appropriate messages for each audience as well as the appropriate vehicles for dissemination of those messages.

Frequently, an important message may need to be directed towards a group that is not the beneficiary. A primary target for communication related to development projects for women may well be men. Each country must determine what level of intensity of the communication strategy will be most effective: an intensive campaign, brief in duration but high in profile, or one that is cumulative, reaching smaller audiences but building up over a period of time.

In addition to the mass communications media, appropriate vehicles for carrying message of change in rural areas are activities such as folk theater, songs and puppetry. These can reinforce discussion in the more traditional open forums.

A mutually reinforcing relationship arises when individual initiative, as shown by women participating in women's programmes, is supported by the village. This process of developing a community spirit to support and fortify individual efforts on the part of women is brought about through an education and communication programme which precedes project

activities. It is the effort to achieve such a progressive, dynamic and, above all, harmonious relationship that characterizes Baha'i programmes of social development.

The fundamental concept underlying the two-fold approach of communication and education is that change in behaviour and attitude can be legislated but cannot always be enforced. What legislation can do is to allow new ideas to permeate a community, be reflected upon, and finally be adapted and adopted in a harmonious and non-aggressive way. A programme of communication and education fosters dialogue and draws participants into the development process to the point where the stimulus for change comes from within the community. This maximizes the prospects for continuity after external support has ceased.

The Baha'i International Community offers these views and recommendations as a contribution towards developing a framework within which development activities can take place. It fully supports the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General and is ready to offer every possible assistance in disseminating these guidelines.

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 29 and 30 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

## Appendix C



Traducción de una carta de la Oficina de Desarrollo Socio-Económico del Centro Mundial Bahá'í

Fecha: 11 de mayo, 1989

Dirigida a: las AENs de Benin, Bolivia, Brasil, Cameroon, Islas Fiji, India, la República de Irlanda, Italia, Lesotho, Liberia, Malasia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Swazilandia, Zaire, y Zambia.

Queridos amigos Bahá'ís:

Una de las enseñanzas principales de nuestra Fe, y una que fue mencionada por la Casa Universal de Justicia como vital para el desarrollo de paz mundial, es la igualdad de hombres y mujeres. Mientras que el rol de la mujer en el establecimiento de paz mundial se hace cada vez mas evidente, también está muy claro que en la mayor parte del mundo, los roles de las mujeres están rígidamente definidas o sumergidas en tradiciones que se han aceptado durante largo tiempo.

Pocas comunidades han buscado activamente mejorar sistemáticamente la posición de las mujeres, espiritual, social, y económicamente. Sin embargo, adjunto a esta carta usted encontrará la descripción de un proyecto que está enfocado en el mejoramiento de la posición de la mujer en la sociedad. Las actividades propuestas facilitarían el progreso dentro del entendimiento a nivel local de asuntos referentes a la mujer, mediante el uso de técnicas sencillas de investigación, el desarrollo de mensajes apropiados, el uso de métodos tradicionales y modernos de comunicación, la identificación de grupos target, reconocimiento de la diversidad de actitudes y comportamientos en relación a la mujer, y programas de desarrollo socio-económico que podrían dar lugar a cambios de comportamiento tangibles y aceptables.

Durante el último año, la Comunidad Bahá'í Internacional ha trabajado junto con el Fondo de Desarrollo para Mujeres (UNIFEM) de las Naciones Unidas, una organización responsable de la promoción de la posición de la mujer, para desarrollar una actividad conjunta que sería implementada por medio de Asambleas locales seleccionadas. El proyecto consiste en que las Asambleas Locales a técnicas innovadoras de implementación que se apoyan tanto en métodos tradicionales como modernos, y en desarrollar una actividad centralizada para practicar habilidades administrativas tales como identificación de necesidades, planeamiento, definición de objetivos, la consulta, toma de decisiones, movilización comunitaria, implementación, manejo financiero, y evaluación. Como esto es un proyecto piloto el programa proporcionaría asesores técnicos para ayudar a aquellas Asambleas que no tengan expertos en comunicaciones.

Se ha considerado que su comunidad es capaz de sostener un proyecto así. Adjunto hay dos artículos para su consideración. El primero es un bosquejo de las responsabilidades que debe aceptar cualquier Asamblea Espiritual Nacional que decida participar. El segundo es una explicación detallada del proyecto. Se solicita a su Asamblea que consulte sobre esta información y comunicar a nuestra oficina antes del 31 de agosto, 1989, si desean ser considerados para este proyecto o no. Aquellas Asambleas que responden hasta esa fecha, indicando que desean

- 2 -

Incluirse, recibirán mas información.

Cuando hayan respondido todas las Asambleas Espirituales Nacionales mencionadas, se formulará una propuesta detallada de proyecto y se la presentará a UNIFEM para su consideración. No hay seguridad de que este proyecto Baha'í recibirá financiamiento. Sin embargo, la necesidad de mejorar la posición de la mujer en mundo es tan grande que justifica tal proyecto, aún si tengamos que financiarlo enteramente o en parte con nuestros propios recursos.

Se agradecería su franca evaluación de las posibilidades de que este proyecto pueda contribuir al mejoramiento de la posición de las mujeres en su comunidad. Sírvense notar que ustedes no están bajo obligación alguna de participar en este esfuerzo.

Con cariñosos saludos Baha'is,

Hassan Sabri  
de parte de la Oficina de Desarrollo Socio-Económico

## RESPONSABILIDADES

Se buscará financiamiento de UNIFEM para algunas partes de este esfuerzo. Otros gastos serán la responsabilidad de la Asamblea Espiritual Nacional que decida involucrarse. El proyecto inicia tendrá una duración aproximada de dos años. Además se podrán crear proyectos de iniciativa local para responder a necesidades identificadas durante este esfuerzo, los que deberán ser auto-suficientes.

## Responsabilidades de la Asamblea Espiritual Nacional:

Encontrar una persona quien trabaje tiempo completo en la administración de este proyecto de cambio de actitudes. Es mujer viajaría a las comunidades locales seleccionadas, asistiría a los talleres, y administraría a todos los aspectos de las actividades del proyecto.

Proporcionar oficina y servicios de contaduría para el proyecto:

Disponer de tiempo en las reuniones de Asamblea Nacional o nombrar un comité de mujeres quienes se involucrarían en el proyecto como un servicio a la comunidad.

## Fondos de fuentes externas sostendrían lo siguiente:

Sueldo para una persona tiempo completo.

Los gastos para desarrollar materiales de comunicación.

Viáticos para la directora del proyecto cuando esté visitando a las comunidades, además de gastos de transporte público.

Todos los gastos para los talleres y para entrenamiento.

Todos los gastos relacionados a los servicios de asesores técnicos.

Los gastos de una evaluación final del proyecto.

Cada Asamblea Nacional que desea participar en este proyecto de incluir con su carta de aceptación un presupuesto aproximado de los siguientes gastos, lo cual servirá a la Comunidad Internacional Baha'i para preparar un presupuesto para presentar a UNIFEM, la Agencia de las Naciones Unidas de la cual se solicitan fondos.

- Sueldo local para una persona para un año.

Un costo promedio para transporte desde la oficina del proyecto hasta una comunidad donde se podría trabajar.

Un costo promedio por noche para viáticos de la directora.

proyecto cuando visite a las comunidades.

Costo aproximado para imprimir un librito de 20 paginas con ilustraciones (los primeros mil ejemplares).

#### Entrenamiento

Talleres de diferentes niveles se organizarían para el personal según su participación. Los talleres deben producir herramientas y materiales de investigación además de proporcionar entrenamiento en activación y técnicas de movilización comunitaria, etc.

X Miembros de las Asambleas Locales y personal del proyecto aprenderían habilidades para administrar el proyecto, un proyecto de comunicación humana. Algunas de estas habilidades serían identificación de problemas, uso de datos para la toma de decisiones y análisis, manejo de recursos, planeamiento y registros, supervisión de actividades, y administración financiera incluyendo contaduría y evaluación.

#### Informes

Cada Asamblea Espiritual Nacional presentará un informe al final de cada fase de actividades, y también un informe final. Cada informe incluirá una narración del progreso además de un informe financiero detallado.

## Appendix D

Appendix D  
The Variety of Terms for Participatory Methods

The following participatory methods are commonly used:

- Participatory Analysis and Learning Methods (PALM)
- Participatory Action Research (PAR)
- Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)
- Participatory Rural Appraisal and Planning (PRAP)
- Participatory Urban Appraisal (PUA)
- Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA)
- Theatre for Development

The following additional participatory terms are derived from the above:

- Agroecosystem Analysis (AEA)
- Beneficiary Assessment
- Development Education Leadership Teams (DELTA)
- Diagnosis and Design (D&D)
- Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA)
- Participatory Research Methodology (PRM)
- Participatory Technology Development (PTD)
- Planning for Real (PfR)
- Process Documentation
- Rapid Appraisal (RA)
- Rapid Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge Systems (RAAKS)
- Rapid Assessment Procedures (RAP)
- Rapid Assessment Techniques (RAT)
- Rapid Catchment Analysis (RCA)
- Rapid Ethnographic Assessment (REA)
- Rapid Food Security Assessment (RFSA)
- Rapid Multi-perspective Appraisal (RMA)
- Rapid Organizational Assessment (ROA)
- Soft Systems Methodology (SSM)
- Training for Transformation
- Visualization in Participatory Programs (VIPP)

Most common techniques used in the PLA toolbox are:

- Resource mapping and modeling
- Transect walk
- Matrix scoring and ranking
- Historical profile
- Daily routine and activity profiles
- Seasonal analysis
- Structural/venn diagrams
- Network diagrams
- Impact flow diagrams
- Problem tree

Pretty, J.N. (.....) Participatory Learning and Action: Principles, Methods, and Guidelines

## Appendix E

Traducción de una carta de la Oficina de Desarrollo  
Socio-Económico del Centro Mundial Bahá'í

Fecha: 11 de mayo, 1989

Dirigida a: las AENs de Benin, Bolivia, Brasil, Cameroon, Islas  
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Se ha considerado que su comunidad es capaz de sostener un proyecto así. Adjunto hay dos artículos para su consideración. El primero es un bosquejo de las responsabilidades que debe aceptar cualquier Asamblea Espiritual Nacional que decida participar. El segundo es una explicación detallada del proyecto. Se solicita a su Asamblea que consulte sobre esta información y comunicar a nuestra oficina antes del 31 de agosto, 1989, si desean ser considerados para este proyecto o no. Aquellas Asambleas que responden hasta esa fecha, indicando que desean



Incluirse, recibirán mas información.

Cuando hayan respondido todas las Asambleas Espirituales Nacionales mencionadas, se formulará una propuesta detallada de proyecto y se la presentará a UNIFEM para su consideración. Hay seguridad de que este proyecto Baha'í recibirá financiamiento. Sin embargo, la necesidad de mejorar la posición de la mujer en el mundo es tan grande que justifica tal proyecto, aún si tenemos que financiarlo enteramente o en parte con nuestros propios recursos.

Se agradecería su franca evaluación de las posibilidades de que el proyecto pueda contribuir al mejoramiento de la posición de las mujeres en su comunidad. Sírvense notar que ustedes no están obligados alguna de participar en este esfuerzo.

Con cariñosos saludos Baha'is,

Hassan Sabri  
de parte de la Oficina de Desarrollo Socio-Económico

## RESPONSABILIDADES

Se buscará financiamiento de UNIFEM para algunas partes de este esfuerzo. Otros gastos serán la responsabilidad de la Asamblea Espiritual Nacional que decida involucrarse. El proyecto iniciará una duración aproximada de dos años. Además se podrán crear proyectos de iniciativa local para responder a necesidades identificadas durante este esfuerzo, los que deberán ser auto-suficientes.

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Todos los gastos para los talleres y para entrenamiento.

Todos los gastos relacionados a los servicios de asesores técnicos.

Los gastos de una evaluación final del proyecto.

Cada Asamblea Nacional que desea participar en este proyecto de cambio deberá incluir con su carta de aceptación un presupuesto aproximado de los siguientes gastos, lo cual servirá a la Comunidad.

Internacional Bahá'í para preparar un presupuesto para presentar a UNIFEM, la Agencia de las Naciones Unidas de la cual se solicitan fondos.

- Sueldo local para una persona para un año.

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#### Informes

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## Appendix F

## 2/

## VILLAGE PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

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WHO/

What communal resources exist in the community?

What income sources do people have?

Who lives in each household?

Who has completed school?

Who is now going to school?

How is labor divided in the community?

Could this be changed?

Who makes what decisions?

Could this be changed?

How do women see themselves?

How do men see themselves?

How do men see women?

How do women see men?

These are the questions that any effort for social change must begin with. You can't be clear about how things ought to be until you know for sure how things really are.

Government agencies, donor groups, political committees are usually the ones who gather information about others. The following activities are designed so that you can ask your own questions and determine what is and is not important to your community.

### MAKING AN INFORMAL VILLAGE MAP

An informal village map is very different from the maps you study in school which detail geographical features, roads and exact distances from one point to the next. A village map is a picture focusing on people and important local places in a particular community. This project works best with small, rural communities

VILLAGE PARTICIPATION RESEAF



WHO/J. Marshall

## ■ PURPOSE

The purpose of making a village map is to be process of self-discovery and examination. Through village realities and physically recreating pictures will involve group discussion, group and group action.

## ■ PARTICIPANTS

This activity can be done by any size group. If you have more participants than you need for a community, make several different maps. If you have a large community, you'll probably need a number of sessions to complete the map. Men and women easily work together on this project. The facilitator should make sure that everyone in the group is an equal participant.

## ■ MATERIALS

The materials needed to make a village map depend on how much time and interest the group has. A simple map can be drawn in dirt with a stick. If inexpensive newsprint and marking pens are available, a more permanent map can be made. More elaborate, colorful and artistic maps are described below.

## ■ ACTIVITY STEPS

- 1 Take a group walk through the area you plan to map.  
Identify places used by the entire community such as churches, schools, activity centers, grain storage, water pump, group garden, vendor kiosks, informal gathering places and local landmarks such as streams, unusual rock formations, ancient trees or ancestral places with sacred or historical importance.  
Identify public facilities being built and those that are planned for the future.
- 2 Count the number of households in the area you want to map.  
Divide the number of households by the number of people participating in the mapping project. [For example, if there are 24 households and 8 group members, each member is responsible for collecting information from 3 households.]  
If the community is larger than this, you'll need more participants or more map making sessions.
- 3 Each participant visits the households assigned to them to collect whatever information their neighbors will share with them.  
Describe the purpose of the map as a community picture to be created by members of the community. Invite adult household members to participate in the actual map making and other project activities as they wish.

The neighborhood information you collect to use in illustrating your map will depend on the things the group feels should be documented to help better understand the roles of men and women in the community.

*delicate choice!*

The facts you might gather about household members, income sources, schooling, special skills, community leadership roles will help in defining how your own community functions and why. Typical things that can be included in the neighborhood interviews are:

- a) The number of adults in each household, their gender, their family role (mother/father/grandparent/aunt/uncle/etc.)
- b) The number of school years they completed, why they left school, how they feel about their school experiences, how far do they want their sons to go in school, how far do they want the daughters to go in school
- c) What they do to bring outside income to the family (cash crop/paid labor for others/product of goods for sale/etc.)
- d) The number of children, their age, gender and school status
- e) Special skills such as an unusually productive garden, animal husbandry, carpentry, weaving, pottery, sewing, etc.
- f) Community leadership role (chief/village elder/minister/doctor/traditional healer/herbalist/teacher/homecraft worker/midwife/council member/traditional artist or performer/tribal oral historian/etc.)
- g) Available transport (car, motorbike, bicycle, cart, none).

To remember all the details, the person collecting this information can write it down during the visit. They can use simple picture symbols that will make the information easy to recall later.

- 4** The map can begin with a general outline of village landmarks leaving lots of space for individual participants to fill in their household details.

The first map can be done as rough drawings using stick figures and other simple pictures to show who is who and what is what. How the map actually develops will differ from one group to the next.

- 5** The important thing is for each participant to contribute some part of the map drawing and for the community to view this as a tribute to itself and not a criticism.

- 5** Those who have worked on making the map can invite relatives and neighbors to join them for a "tour."

Participants can take turns explaining the map's pictures and symbols.

Participants can also describe their own impressions of what they saw and discovered about the community while mapping it.

During the "tour," visitors can point out missing details and add them to the drawing. They can also add their impressions of how well the community functions.

What things are those present proud of in the community and what things do they see as problems?

- 6** The roughly drawn map can be expanded into a colorfully painted wall mural, a handsewn fabric picture banner, a large collage using available scrap material, bottle caps, used food cartons, wood chips, plant leaves, etc.

To be effective, this activity should make full use of local imagination and creativity. A number of different informal discussions related to the status of village women can be developed by the facilitator during this group work.

VILLAGE PARTICIPATION RESEARCH

*"Women bear and care for the world's children. They grow most of the developing world's food, most of its crops, fetch most of its water, collect most of its fuel, feed most of its animals, weed of its fields. And when their work outside the home is done, they light the third world's fires, cook meals, clean its compounds, wash its clothes, shop for its needs, and look after its old and its i*



WHO/FAO



WHO



WHO/UNDP/R. Massey



## Making Labor Calendar

To make a "labor calendar," you list and illustrate all of the things adults do in the village month by month. In most communities, seasonal changes in the weather affect what must be done and when. People who depend on subsistence farming or cash crops have very specific tasks that change throughout the year.



### ■ PURPOSE

The purpose of making a "labor calendar" is to identify what tasks are done in the community and how labor is divided between men and women. You can simply list different tasks and who does them or illustrate each task with simple picture.

### ■ PARTICIPANTS

Men and women can work together in a group on this activity. But, it might be more interesting what differences emerge in a "labor calendar" done by women on their own and another done

### ■ MATERIALS

The materials needed to do this are similar to those used to make the village map. You can use chalkboard and chalk. You can use paper and writing pens, color markers or crayons. If these are available, a stick to draw in dirt will do as well.

### ■ ACTIVITY STEPS

- 1 Divide men and women into different groups if they're working together on this activity. Ask each group to list or illustrate the tasks they do each day and everyday.  
[Be as specific as possible. For example, instead of listing "housekeeping," "childcare" or "list all the different things involved such as gathering firewood, carrying water, collecting preparing different parts of each meal, feeding chickens, gathering eggs, cleaning utensils, diapers, washing clothes, plaiting hair and so on.]
- 2 Begin with the current month and work forward month by month until you've completed pages for all 12 months of the year.  
What tasks are adults involved in now—preparing fields, planting, weeding, harvesting, etc.  
What tasks will need to be done next month and the next and so on?  
List or illustrate all seasonal tasks done each month and identify who usually does each or women, girls or boys.
- 3 Study the combined task lists or illustrations. If the difference in the amount of work men compared to what women do is striking, discuss this with the group.

How do women manage their time? How much free time do they have compared to men. Do help women in any significant way? If not, why not?

- 4 An interesting exercise of "WHAT IF?" can challenge the group to think more creatively about dividing labor.

For this exercise, there are no right and no wrong answers. Use imagination to get beyond the boundaries of what we now see as normal. Magic and supernatural intervention are not allowed. "crazy ideas" and fantasy are.

*What if all men and school age boys left the village for one year?*

Study the tasks on the "labor calendar." How could daily and monthly tasks be redistributed among village women and girls so that the quality of village life remains at least as good as it was when men were present? How would women and girls reorganize their own work roles and habits? How could men's work be carried on without them?

*What if all women and school age girls left the village for one year?*

How could men and boys reorganize themselves so that the boys continue their schooling, the children are well-cared for, the house and fields maintained, the cooking pots filled, the cloth washed and mended? How could women's work be done without them to do it?

From this exercise, unusual ways of shifting traditional labor roles, managing time, joining hands and combining labor should emerge. How could these same ideas be applied to bring about a productive distribution of tasks between men and women living and working together?

### Changing Roles in "What Would You Do?" Situations

Learning how to analyze situations and arrive at decisions that are positive takes practice. Women often are shut out of decision-making in the home and in community activities. Men often make decisions that are not supportive of women or appropriate to their needs.

#### ■ PURPOSE

The purpose of role-playing "What Would You Do?" situations is to allow participants to analyze how decisions are made, by whom, and how they affect others. This game involves everyone and allows participants to see how communication in the decision-making process might be improved.

#### ■ PARTICIPANTS

Men and women should first do this activity separately. The facilitator can then bring the two groups together to repeat the activity and jointly analyze their different approaches.



WHC

VILLAGE PARTICIPATION I

## Appendix F

## Appendix F

### Formal Focused Interview Protocol

#### Development

- What is your involvement in development? Briefly describe your role and provide a brief historical overview of what led you to this work.
  - How do you define development? In your view, how does development happen?
  - How do you define capacity building? How does capacity grow? How would you measure the growth of capacity?
  - What are the optimal conditions for change? Please give an example from your experience.
  - Do you believe attitudes and habits can change? What would make individuals want to change? What role do you think culture plays?
  - What indicators would you use to evaluate the success of a development project?
  - **UNIFEM/BIC "Traditional Media as Change Agent" Project**
  - Can you describe the role you played in the 'Traditional Media as a Change Agent' project?
  - What is your understanding of what happened in the project?
  - What do you think happened as a result of this project?
  - To what extent were the local participants able to sustain and apply the skills they learned about gender into their daily community lives in the Cameroon and Malaysia sites?
  - In the Bolivia site?
  - What are your perceptions of how the local participants felt about the project?
  - How do you perceive the overall success of the "Traditional Media as Change Agent" project?
  - The Bolivia site?
  - On a scale of 1-6 with 1 as low and 6 as high, how would you evaluate the overall success of the project in Bolivia?
- |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
- What would you recommend changes or ways for improvement?
  - If you were to replicate the project, what would you do differently?

#### Institutional Arrangements

- How does your institution communicate with other institutions? Can you give an example of how this mechanism would operate? What is your role in this process? How do you obtain information and communicate between institutions?
  - What arrangements are there for giving your institution/organization feedback? What is the process used for soliciting and or responding to feedback? Who makes these decisions?
  - How does your institutions incorporate lessons learned?
  - How would you measure institutional feedback on a scale of 1 to 6 with 1 as low and 6 as high:
- |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

#### Gender and Development

- What do you understand the term 'gender' to mean? What does 'gender in development' mean to you?
- What is your view of women's status (global, national, local)?
- Do you believe that women's status needs to improve?

- Do you think attitudes and habits towards gender and women's status need to change? Could you give some examples?
- What is your interest in gender and development? Are the outcomes of a gender and development approach different from more mainstream women in development approaches? Can you give some examples?
- What leads you to believe the rural villagers would want to change their attitudes and habits about women's low status?
- What was a project that included men in partnership with women to help the community identify problems associated with the low status of women a good approach?
- On a scale from 1 to 6 with 1 as low and 6 as high, how would you rate gender approaches to development:

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

#### Lessons Learned

- What emerged for you as areas for further interest or study as a result of this project?
- Is there anything else you would like to share?

## Appendix G

Appendix G  
Informal Focused Interview Protocol

**Individual Memory**

- Who from the outside came in to work on this project?
- Who from this village participated?
- Who still lives in the village?
- Where did the others go?
- What is your memory of what actually happened?
- What do you remember about the purpose of the project?
- At that time, did you think it was useful to you? In what way?

**Participation**

- How did you participate?
- What did you do?
- What do you remember others in your community doing?

**Change**

- Did you notice any change in your life? In the lives of others?
- Did the project have any effect on the women?
- Did the project have any effect on the men?
- Did the project have any effect on the children?
- Did it change the way you make decisions?

**Division of Labor**

- Do the men now help with any of the work women usually?
- Do women now help with any of the work men usually do?
- Do you think women and men are equal in your village? Can you give an example?

**Consultation**

- Do you now talk about how to get work done differently? How?
- Do women and men consult with each other more as a result of this project?
- If not, what would improve consultation?

**Outcomes**

- After the project, did you decide you wanted any one in your family to get more education?
- What did you do about it?
- What did you wish you could do?
- What prevented you?
- If you wanted to get more education, what would stand in your way? What would make it easier?
- What would more education do for your life? For others in your family?
- What did you wish the project could have done that it didn't do?

**Purpose of Project**

- What do you understand as the purpose of a project?
  - What needs do you have for a project in your community?
  - Once people from the outside left, where you about to continue the project?
  - What helped you to continue?
  - If it didn't continue, how could it have?
  - What needs do you now have for your community?
  - Would everyone agree with you? Who would? Who wouldn't?
  - Where there other needs in your community that you thought were more important than what the project focused on?
  - Where you able to talk about that during the project? Why or why not?
- 
- **Perceptions of the success of the project**
  - Did you think the project was successful? Did it help you? How?
  - If it did not, can you identify why it didn't help you?
  - Was there something about the project or the participants that made it not work?
  - Was there something about the location that made it not work?
  - Did you enjoy participating?
  - Did you feel that you were learning and becoming stronger individuals?
  - Do you think the project help strengthen your family/community? In what way?

**Unity**

- Is there more unity in your community today as a result of this project?
- What would unity in your community look like?
- What would you be doing?

**Lessons Learned**

- If you or your community could give advise to another community who is . thinkin about participating in this project, what would you say?
- Would you suggest it was a good use of their time? Why or why not?
- If you had the opportunity to work on this project again, would you?
- Which individuals were the most influential in the project?
- Can you recommend anyone that would make this project work?
- What do you think about the equality of women and men?
- Would others agree with you? Who would? Who wouldn't?

**Microloans**

- What would you think about a bank lending money to women to start an economic project? How would you be affected? How would your family be affected?
- How would you village be affected if the women in this village started an project th generated income?



## Appendix H

## Appendix H

### Informal Focused Interview Protocol with Photographs:

Here's a picture of you that I took from video that was made of the project 5 years ago.

#### **Individual memory**

- What do you remember doing in this picture?
- Where were you?
- Where was your family?
- Why were you doing this?

#### **Time Sequence**

- Was this the first time this happened?
- What happened afterwards?

#### **Sustainability**

- Have you been able to continue what you were doing in this picture?

#### **Family Context**

- What was it like for the rest of your family while you were doing this?

#### **Outcomes - Change**

- What happened in your family as a result?
- Is your life any different since this picture was taken?
- Do you think that is a result of participating in the project?
- If there were no changes, what could have happened to help you?
- 

#### **Affect**

- Did you like what you were doing?

#### **Support**

- Who would you need to help you continue these changes?
- Where would you go for that help?
- Would others go with you?
- Who wouldn't?

#### **Community**

- Has this been helpful to your community? In what ways?
- If not, what would be helpful to your community?

## Appendix I

Appendix I  
Formal Survey Protocol Consent Form

Research Title:

Assessing Change in Gender Attitudes and Behavior with Quechua Indians in Bolivia—Does Gender and Development (GAD) Work Here?

Researcher: Melinda Salazar

The purpose of this study is to learn lessons from the evaluation of the implementation of a GAI project in Bolivia to better assess how a gender approach works in an indigenous community in Latin America. I will evaluate the UNIFEM/BIC "Traditional Media as Change Agent" project implemented in the Bolivian site. You are asked to answer questions about your involvement in project, the institution or organization you represent, your understanding of development, and your perspective about effective development projects and policies that improve the status of women in Bolivia.

1. The following statements protect your anonymity and confidentiality.

-I understand that the confidentiality of all data and records associated with my participation in this research, including my identity, will be fully maintained by masking names in documentation. All audio and/or videotapes used in this interview will be maintained in the researcher's possession and used for research and educational purposes.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, CONSENT/AGREE to participate in this research project.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, REFUSE/DO NOT AGREE to participate in this research project.

The following statements protect your anonymity and confidentiality.

-I understand that I want this researcher to use the information I provide, including my identity, for research and educational purposes.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, CONSENT/AGREE to participate in this research project.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, REFUSE/DO NOT AGREE to participate in this research project.

Informal Interview Consent

The purpose of this study is to <sup>learn</sup> more about how well the "Traditional Media as Change Agent" project worked in your community. Please answer questions about your participation in the project, your perceptions of the project, and your recommendation about other ways to improve the status of women in Bolivia.

The following statements protect your anonymity and confidentiality.

-I understand that the confidentiality of all data and records associated with my participation in this research, including my identity, will be fully maintained. Any audio and/or videotapes used in this interview will be maintained in the researcher's possession and for research purposes. They will be destroyed after their use.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, CONSENT/AGREE to participate in this research project.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, REFUSE/DO NOT AGREE to participate in this research project.

About 5 years ago, some people visited your village and helped women and men identify problems associated with the low status of women by providing some training and teaching some tools for consultation. This project was sponsored by UNIFEM and I and was called, "Traditional Media as Change Agent." I would like to know more about what happened and your perceptions of the project so we can improve it.

## Appendix J

# UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Office of Sponsored Research  
Service Building  
51 College Road  
Durham, New Hampshire 03824-3585  
(603) 862-3564 FAX

LAST NAME	Salazar	FIRST NAME	
DEPT	OFF-CAMPUS 42 Oyster River Road, Durham, NH 03824	APP'L DATE	
ADDRESS		IRB #	
OFF-(if applicable)		REVIEW LEVEL	
ADDRESS		DATE OF NOTICE	
(if applicable)			

PROJECT TITLE A Participatory Evaluation: Andean Women Speak About Gender and Development

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research reviewed and approved project as Expedited as described in Federal Regulations 45 CFR 46, Subsection 46.110 (b) 7, with the following:


- Faculty advisor needs to understand and agree to how investigator intends to use videotapes in the context purposes" (what situations and audiences might "educational purposes" encompass). It is the responsibility and faculty advisor to insure that the limits of the informed consent obtained are not exceeded, and that participants are informed as to the use of their image.

Approval for this protocol expires one year from the approval date above. At the end of the approval period, you will be asked to submit a project report with regard to the involvement of human subjects. If your project is still active, you may request an extension of IRB approval through this office.

The protection of human subjects in your study is an ongoing process for which you hold primary responsibility. For approval for your protocol, you agree to conduct the project in accordance with the ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects in research, as described in the following three reports: Belmont Report; Title 45, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 46; and UNH's Multiple Project Assurance of Compliance. The full text of these documents is available online at [http://www.unh.edu/osr/compliance/Regulatory\\_Compliance.html](http://www.unh.edu/osr/compliance/Regulatory_Compliance.html) and by request from the Office of Sponsored Research.

Changes in your protocol must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval prior to implementation. If you have questions or concerns about your project or this approval, please feel free to contact me directly. Please refer to the IRB # above in all correspondence related to this project. The IRB wishes you success with your research.

For the IRB,

  
Julie F. Simpson  
Regulatory Compliance Manager  
Office of Sponsored Research

cc: File  
Mimi Larsen Becker, Natural Resources